

DEAD RIGHT
THE DE WIS CASE
page 80

MARCH/APRIL 1993 ♦ \$3.50



THE GUTLESS GUILD?

page 25



IRAQGATE: WHO KNEW IT WHO BLEW IT

page 48



THE HOT MAGAZINE

page 31

The New Yorker's
Tina Brown



PLUS
TECHNOLOGY:
THE DOWNSIDE
OF
WONDERLAND
AND
FREE PRESS
BLUES IN
SLOVAKIA





When Lisa was born
her kidneys didn't work.
So we helped Lisa's mother
learn to care for her.

It saved \$200,000
in hospital costs.

And let Lisa grow
up at home.

Aetna's Individual Case Managers help people who are in our group plans receive proper health care. They help to find the best available treatment by understanding people's needs and by working with their doctors. In many cases, by discovering alternative methods for treatment, medical costs are reduced. And more importantly, people can recover in a somewhat more comfortable environment. Like home, for instance. With family.

Aetna. A policy to do more.





Photo: Michael A. Cressinger

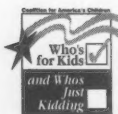
When They Build A Better Health Care System, Will It Come In Children's Sizes?

For too long, children's health care requirements have been footnotes to the public policy debate. The result? Today, the government pays a doctor 50% more for treating an elderly person than for seeing a sick child. The beat goes on. Nowhere in the current proposals is there adequate consideration of the needs of children and those who provide for them.

The truth is children are different. They depend more on basic and preventive care in the earliest years of life. And when they become sick and

require hospitalization, children need medications, procedures and technologies adapted to their smaller sizes.

If you're not following the kids' angle on health care reform, you're not getting the whole story. For background papers documenting children's needs and perspectives on health care reform, call or write NACHRI.



National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI)
401 Wythe Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 ♥ 703•684•1355 ♥ FAX 703•684•1589



MARCH/APRIL 1993

"TO ASSESS
THE PERFORMANCE
OF JOURNALISM...
TO HELP STIMULATE
CONTINUING
IMPROVEMENT IN
THE PROFESSION,
AND TO SPEAK OUT
FOR WHAT IS
RIGHT, FAIR,
AND DECENT"

From the founding editorial,
1961



Publisher Mortimer Zuckerman,
page 25



Journalist Manuel de Dios,
page 39

Sticking With the Union?

*From the New York Daily News to the Los Angeles Times,
The Newspaper Guild is fighting for its future*

BY STEPHEN J. SIMURDA

25

Tina's New Yorker

*Last fall, Tina Brown — the very British editor of
the very trendy Vanity Fair — became editor of a very
different kind of magazine, and promptly made it hers*

BY ERIC UTNE

31

Mr. Shawn's New Yorker

BY LAWRENCE WESCHLER

37

Dead Right

*Manuel de Dios's investigative reporting on the
drug trade in New York was sometimes reckless,
but often on target — and it got him killed*

BY BILL BERKELEY

39

FREE PRESS BLUES

Here Comes the New Boss, Worse Than the Old Boss

*In Slovakia, progress toward free expression
hasn't been merely slow — it's been reversed.*

BY ROB URBAN AND LAURA ZELENKO

45

Tab Plagues Prague!

BY ERIN KELLY

46

Iraqgate: The Big One That (Almost) Got Away

Who chased it — and who didn't

BY RUSS W. BAKER

48

◆ Chronicle 11

*Israeli TV: sea change on the
airwaves*

*How Gannett 2000 is playing
in Burlington*

Business Week's libel lesson

Portrait of a language czar

Public radio's cheap air

*Canada: government as TV
critic*

Follow-up: From XS to Ice

◆ TECHNOLOGY 55

The Downside of Wonderland

BY ANDREW SCHNEIDER



◆ BOOKS 57

**Read All About It! The
Corporate Takeover of
America's Newspapers**
by James D. Squires
reviewed by Howard Kurtz

**The Five Myths of
Television Power: Or,
Why the Medium is
Not the Message**

by Douglas Davis

reviewed by Walter Goodman

**Covering the Body: The
Kennedy Assassination,
the Media, and the
Shaping of Collective
Memory**

by Barbie Zelizer

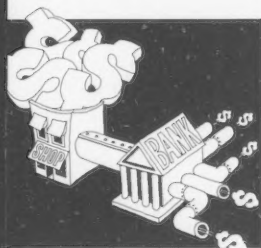
reviewed by James Boylan

◆ LETTERS 4

◆ DARTS AND LAURELS 21

◆ SHORT TAKES 63

◆ THE LOWER CASE 65



page 41

**PUBLISHER**

JOAN KONNER

EDITOR

SUZANNE BRAUN LEVINE

SENIOR EDITOR

JON SWAN

MANAGING EDITOR

GLORIA COOPER

ART DIRECTOR

IRA FRIEDLANDER

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MIKE HOYT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JAMES BOYLAN

D.D. GUTTENPLAN

CHRISTOPHER HANSON

JON KATZ

MICHAEL MASSING

BRUCE PORTER

STEVE WEINBERG

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

MARGARET KENNEDY

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

DENISE DeJOSEPH

SHELLY J. HANN

INTERNS

DANIEL EISENBERG

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

DENNIS F. GIZA

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

LOUISA D. KEARNEY

LEADERSHIP NETWORK

KIKI PARIS

FOUNDING PUBLISHER

EDWARD W. BARRETT

FACULTY CONSULTANTS

BARBARA BELFORD,

OSBORN ELLIOTT, PHYLLIS T. GARLAND,

KENNETH K. GOLDSTEIN

STEPHEN D. ISAACS, DONALD R. SHANOR

SUSTAINING GRANTS

THE BAUMAN FOUNDATION

CABOT FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST

THE AARON DIAMOND FOUNDATION

MEREDITH CORPORATION

THE SAUL AND JANICE POLIAK

CENTER FOR THE STUDY

OF FIRST AMENDMENT ISSUES

THE FLORENCE AND JOHN SCHUMANN

FOUNDATION

**COLUMBIA
JOURNALISM
REVIEW**

700 JOURNALISM BUILDING

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK, NY 10027

EDITORIAL: (212) 854-1881

BUSINESS & ADVERTISING: (212) 854-2716

SUBSCRIPTIONS: (800) 669-1002

LETTERS

COPS AND TV — AND REALITY

It was with great interest that I read Jon Katz's "Covering the Cops" (CJR, January/February). While Katz touches on issues that merit attention (namely, that police officers are subject to misrepresentation in the media and that they're up against difficult odds as urban violence increases), he fails to question the "reality" of reality-based TV. About police and the reality-based show *Cops*, Katz states, "As *Cops* makes clear, the more the public sees of their work, the more comprehensible their work becomes."

For over six months I worked in the production department for ABC's reality-based cop show *American Detective*, a prime-time competitor of *Cops*. If Katz had ever produced a reality-based show he would certainly know that reality-based shows like *Cops* are, in fact, commercially endorsed, bite-size chunks of prime-time TV that have been squeezed out of hundreds of thousands of hours of raw footage and significantly edited. This footage, before it's transformed into an acceptable episode, features cops and detectives at their uncensored "best," which invariably includes slander against every minority under the sun, as well as numerous acts of excessive physical and verbal harassment. The cops are well aware of the fact that the viewer will never see any of this, since they have a tacit agreement with the producers that they'll be shown in a positive light. And, of course, the producers would never create a show that would portray the cops in anything but a positive light, let alone turn over an "incriminating" video to the authorities. This would amount, in essence, to jeopardizing their (the producers') livelihoods.

Moreover, these days of continuing Rodney King unrest are good for business because, in reality-based TV land, crime does pay — tens of thousands of dollars per episode for starters. Thus, if the streets are dangerous, the cops are busy. And if the cops are busy so, in turn, are the producers, cashing in on crime in cities nationwide.

It is therefore very surprising that Katz should assert: "The cameras recording *Cops* probably would not catch a Rodney King-style beating. The officers would know bet-

ter than to behave like that; even if they didn't, it's unclear whether the broadcast's producers would show it...." Katz makes some stunning assumptions here and breezes by important questions about the role and responsibility of producers, questions that every viewer should be asking. He seems to imply that the producers are a band of good-hearted individuals filling in where journalists left off, rather than a group of entertainment executives whose primary agenda is money-making, the Neilsen Ratings, and their next big Hollywood deal.

It might also interest Katz to know that producers frequently ride with the cops while filming and almost always prod them to repeat certain lines and/or recap events for the camera in a certain "tone." It's therefore almost comical when Katz says, "...the officers on *Cops* are nonetheless revealing, often poignantly so. They almost always pleadingly make their case to a public they know is skeptical." One must not forget that it's the producers here that are most concerned about the public and, more precisely, the ratings.

Katz also states that *Cops* and related programs "...offer Americans more reality than they even imagined possible." Nothing could be farther from the truth. The producers of reality-based TV make their fortunes off the plight of the cops and the disenfranchised by packaging highly edited TV shows that communicate two primary reality-based messages to the viewer: 1. The streets are dangerous — be fearful. 2. The cops are out there — be thankful.

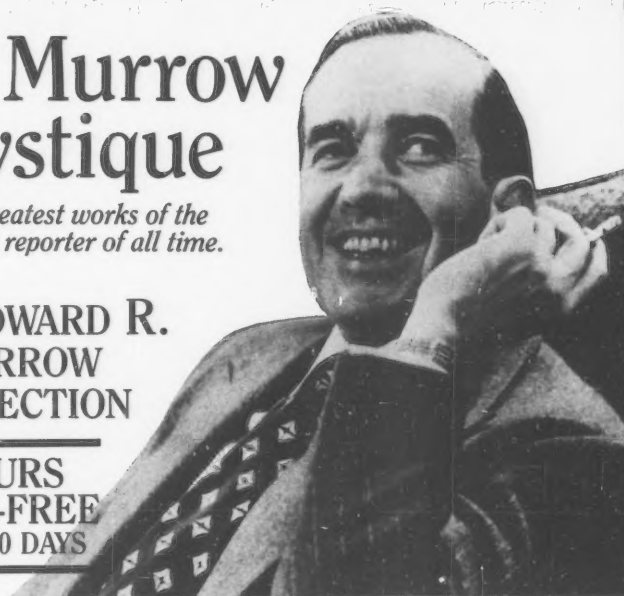
Columbia Journalism Review (ISSN 0010-194X) is published bimonthly under the auspices of the faculty, alumni, and friends of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Volume XXII, Number 6 March/April 1993. Copyright © 1993 Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Subscription rates: one year \$19.95; two years \$34.95; three years \$47.95. Canadian and foreign subscriptions, add \$4 per year. Back issues: \$5.50. Please address all subscription mail to: Columbia Journalism Review, Subscription Service Department, P.O. Box 1943, Marion, Ohio 43302; (800) 669-1002. Editorial office: 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027; (212) 854-1881. Business office: 700A Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027; (212) 854-2716. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing office. No claims for back copies honored after one year. National newsstand distribution: Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 1130 Cleveland Road, Sandusky, Ohio 44870. **Postmaster:** send Form 3579 to Columbia Journalism Review, P.O. Box 1943, Marion, Ohio 43302.

The Murrow Mystique

The greatest works of the greatest reporter of all time.

THE EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION

**YOURS
RISK-FREE
FOR 10 DAYS**



No man in history had a greater influence on television journalism than Edward R. Murrow.

Perhaps the greatest reporter who ever lived, Murrow dared to charge where others feared even to peek. He set new standards in journalistic courage when he reported fearlessly from London rooftops as Nazi bombs rained down all around him. His historic showdown with one of the most powerful and dangerous men in America, Senator Joseph McCarthy, during the controversial "Army/McCarthy" hearings established a benchmark in broadcast excellence few since have been able to meet.

Now the best work, the best reporting, the absolute best of Edward R. Murrow's remarkable career has been captured on THE EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION, a fabulous 5 videocassette treasury you and your family will cherish for years. And it's yours to enjoy risk-free for 10 full days.

RELIVE THE GREATEST MOMENTS IN BROADCAST HISTORY

Here are the legendary broadcasts that made Murrow a television giant. You'll be riveted as you watch Murrow's emotion-charged stories about life in the field for American soldiers in Korea during the Christmas holiday...the innovative way he introduced America to the private lives of stars such as Marilyn Monroe, Zsa Zsa Gabor, John and Jackie Kennedy...his impactful reports on Senator Joseph McCarthy's abuses of power...and his gut-wrenching exposé on the exploitation of America's migrant farm workers.

With his gift for writing, his riveting speaking style, and his commanding presence, Edward R. Murrow left his indelible mark on broadcast journalism—transforming it from a fledgling infant to one of the most influential forces in American society.

Preview THE EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION now RISK-FREE for 10 days. If you like it, it's yours for 4 easy payments of just \$24.95 each plus shipping and handling. However, if you're not totally delighted, return it within 10 days for a full refund or credit to your charge account. We guarantee your satisfaction.

Act now for this incredible EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION. Return the coupon—or for faster service call toll-free. 1-800-538-7766 (Dept. PHK)

NEW ON VIDEOCASSETTE!



You Get Five Fabulous Videocassettes

This Reporter

Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, Ted Koppel and others offer insights on the life of Murrow. Includes his famous London broadcasts. Narrated by Charles Kuralt.

The Best of Person to Person

Warm and penetrating interviews with Frank Sinatra, Marlon Brando, Marilyn Monroe, John and Jacqueline Kennedy and others. Narrated by Connie Chung.

The Best of See It Now

See Murrow's moving visit with a group of G.I.s during the Korean War...an unforgettable interview with Louis Armstrong...a remarkable visit with artist Grandma Moses, plus more. Narrated by Mike Wallace.

The McCarthy Years

Murrow takes on Joseph McCarthy and the Senator's endless Communist witch hunt. Murrow at his finest! Narrated by Walter Cronkite.

Harvest of Shame

The poignant exposé that revealed the exploitation and pathetic living conditions of America's migrant farm workers. One of the most famous documentaries of all time. Narrated by Dan Rather.

Your Guarantee of Satisfaction

You must be 100% delighted with every one of the five videocassettes in THE EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION—or you may return the set within 10 days for a full refund. Your satisfaction is guaranteed or your money back.

REPLY COUPON MAIL TODAY TO: Columbia House Video Library, 1400 North Fruitridge Avenue, P.O. Box 1112, Dept. PHK, Terre Haute, IN 47811-1112

☐ **YES!** I want to relive the golden age of broadcast journalism. Send my 5 videocassette set of THE EDWARD R. MURROW COLLECTION for 4 monthly payments of just \$24.95 each plus shipping and handling. I understand my satisfaction is guaranteed or I may return the set within 10 days for a full refund.

Available in VHS only

☐ My check is enclosed for the first installment of \$24.95 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling (total is \$29.95) made payable to the Columbia House Video Library.

☐ Charge this and future installments to my credit card:

☐ American Express ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
☐ Diners Club ☐ Discover

Acct. No. _____

QP1 Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

QP2 Phone No. (____) _____

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

All orders subject to review. Columbia House Video Library reserves the right to reject or cancel any order. Canadian residents will be serviced from Toronto. Offer may vary. Applicable sales tax added to all orders.

© 1993, The Columbia House Company



KUWAIT UNIVERSITY

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Faculty positions are available at the ranks indicated in the Department of Communications for the 1993-94 academic year. Contracts are for one year, renewable by mutual agreement.

1. Journalism (Reporting, Management, Advertising)
2. Broadcasting (Radio, Television, Broadcast-Management)

Requirements

- Ph.D. degree
- Experience in Teaching at the university level in Arabic
- Adequate record of publications in refereed journals

Monthly Salary

Professor	US \$3,570.00
Associate Professor	US \$2,907.00

In addition, there is a social allowance. There is no taxation.

Other benefits include:

- Maximum teaching load is 9 hours a week
- Free economy air tickets (First class for Professors) annually for the appointee, spouse, and up to 3 children under 20 years of age from and to the origin country of contracting party.
- Free medical care
- Free fully furnished accommodation
- 12 weeks paid summer vacation, 2 weeks mid-year vacation and official holidays.

Application Procedure

Application forms and conditions of service are available from the following address:

KUWAIT UNIVERSITY OFFICE
3500 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008
TEL. NO. (202) 363-8055

Applicant should send completed application form, CV and copy of passport to:

THE DEAN
FACULTY OF ARTS
KUWAIT UNIVERSITY
P.O. Box 23558 SAFAT
13096
KUWAIT
FAX: 965-484-6512/483-7108

Capitalizing on public fear by manipulating real scenarios of domination and control is a subtle and malefic form of pacification that can hardly be considered a public service. Reality-based TV focuses the viewer on the symptoms (the cops) rather than on the problems in our society that are producing criminal activity in the first place; in so doing, these shows actually distance us from reality rather than help us understand it. That a journalist and media critic could miss this point is disconcerting.

Reality-based TV is about one point of view; as Katz does indeed remark: "The police point of view is what the audience sees and hears." But then again, he fails to question what the audience doesn't see and hear — namely, tales that make it difficult to determine who the real criminal is and to what extent he or she may be the victim of a system that has careened out of control. Before the raw footage of reality-based TV ends up on the proverbial cutting room floor, we in the production trenches watch these tales of woe. We see stories that the viewer doesn't — about women who fall into prostitution because they can find no other work, about teenagers who live below the poverty level and sell marijuana to the same white middle-class couch potato who watches reality-based cop shows, about AIDS patients who get busted for smoking small quantities of marijuana to alleviate symptoms resulting from AIDS medication.

These stories and thousands like them will never be shown on reality-based TV because they question the very system that has created, on some level, the misery of its victims, suspects, and criminals. Instead of these stories (which are, in fact, too real for reality-based TV), the viewer is offered a few minutes of manipulated magisterial retribution that they believe to be representative of "reality."

This is not to disparage police or the crucial role they play in our increasingly violent society. Nor is it to disparage some of the insights Katz tries to bring to light; I am simply compelled to comment on what I perceive to be a dangerous form of naivete in Katz's article. He would serve us better by focusing more on his conclusion, where he suggests that "...the press needs to move closer to where it belongs on one of the biggest and most important stories in American life: into the middle, prepared to challenge the police when appropriate, but also willing to capture and put into context the environments in which they work."

Finally, we must all, journalists and general public alike, be aware of the insidious nature of reality-based TV and who is behind it—namely, a small hierarchy of profit-making executives who have appropriated the

public, not private, airwaves. The minute we believe that what they offer as "reality" is indeed real, we are in big trouble — we have slipped into a great vacuum of media-induced unconsciousness.

D. SEAGAL

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.

Jon Katz's "Covering the Cops" hit on a few of the press's shortcomings in covering the police, but he missed other reasons that breed superficial reporting. I offer the following reasons, based on my experience as a reporter who has covered cops for the past four years at small and mid-sized dailies, why readers rarely get an honest look at police:

■ The cop beat is the bottom-of-the-barrel position at most papers. Editors hire rookie reporters or other novices for a beat that is one of the most explosive, sensitive, and demanding. Most young reporters look at the beat as their way to get "hard news" clips to move into a beat of higher prestige. It's hard to focus on how police function when there is high turnover among reporters, and police aren't going to be trusting when presented with a string of new faces.

■ Unless you are at a major daily, editors aren't going to give you the time to do enterprise pieces that explore the relationships between police and the communities they serve. At smaller dailies, the editors just want the "quick hits" so they won't get beat by local TV stations or other competition.

■ For many editors, it's been a long time since they covered cops — if they covered the beat at all. Some editors discourage reporters from going on ride-alongs with cops or shooting at the range with a SWAT team, because they think reporters will identify too much with "the enemy." Editors need to trust police reporters to interact with sources without fear that a reporter might lose a sense of skepticism.

MIKE SPENCER
SARASOTA, FLA.

DEGREES OF SLEAZE

Victor Navasky's essay "The Trouble With Balanced Reporting" (CJR, January/February) would have benefitted from some balanced reporting of its own. He cited *Newsday's* coverage of the Abrams-D'Amato debate on the Imus radio show as an example of how newspapers can report charges and countercharges without attempting to assess the relative merits of each. What he didn't tell readers of CJR was that *Newsday* in fact had done this repeatedly during the campaign, spelling out in considerable detail just what transgressions D'Amato had been accused of, and what the available evidence was, and then doing the

same with Abrams. This included a report in which one member of the Feerick Commission criticized D'Amato's attempts to equate the charges against himself with the Feerick Commission's complaints against Abrams, saying that the Feerick Commission had found no evidence of linkage between campaign contributions and favors where Abrams was concerned, but that in the case of D'Amato "the linkages smell to high heaven."

Mr. Navasky isn't the first journalist to turn an isolated example into a pretense of documentation, of course. But if there is anyone in New York who doesn't fully understand the nature and extent of the allegations against Senator D'Amato, it's not because of insufficient reporting by *Newsday*.

ANTHONY MARRO

EDITOR, *NEWSDAY*
MELVILLE, N.Y.

Victor Navasky replies: *Newsday* indeed did the best job of enterprise reporting on the D'Amato-Abrams race, impressively augmented by Sydney Schanberg's devastating column-series on the senator's derelictions. (As it happens, I mentioned this, along with *The Village Voice's* scoops, in an early draft of the article.) Nevertheless, the point remains: the convention of narrative neutrality in *Newsday's* and everybody else's reporting on the day-to-day campaign charges and countercharges worked to create a false image of moral equivalence between the candidates.

If Victor Navasky's complaint is that the media did not do Abrams's dirty work for him, then I applaud the media. Had Abrams "hammered home" the distinctions between his problems and D'Amato's, the press presumably would have reported his comments. Both Abrams and D'Amato had access to the media, but their choices on how to use that access differed. That is not the fault of the media.

The rules of the game are not perfect, but the alternatives are worse. D'Amato was elected for the reasons the writer enumerated at the onset of his story, not because of the media. But assuming the good work of the media was the deciding factor, I would rather have what some consider a bad candidate in office than one who was helped by reporters.

I work as an adviser to student publications at a major university. I asked student journalists here to read the article and indicate if they agreed with the writer. None of the six who read it agreed. I hope their view represents the future of journalism in this country.

RICHARD DAIGLE

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS ADVISER
EMORY UNIVERSITY, ATLANTA, GA.

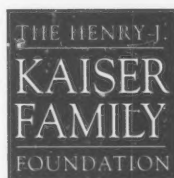
FOR THE RECORD

I and others at *The Record* think Howard Kurtz did a very good job in looking at our company ("A Bad Case of the '80s," *CJR*, January/February), but we think the proper chronology of events is indicated, along with corrections of some of the facts cited in the article.

The Bergen Evening Record Corporation, renamed Macromedia on January 1, 1984, incurred no commercial debt when it purchased four network-affiliated television stations, a weekly newspaper, and two shoppers from 1972 to 1974. After the deaths of my mother (1971) and my father (1975),

taxes on their estates, after a corporate redemption of their stock, were paid without commercial borrowing.

From 1980 to 1986 ("the high-flying '80s"), *The Record* expanded its building and upgraded its equipment, borrowing from two banks as necessary. On December 27, 1985, we closed, with bank borrowing, the purchase of *The News Tribune*, a 50,000-circulation daily in Woodbridge, New Jersey, at what was probably the lowest multiple of any daily newspaper purchase: 2.2 times revenue. The highest amount borrowed during that time was about \$57 million, all but \$20 million having been paid back by the



Announces THE KAISER MEDIA FELLOWSHIPS IN HEALTH FOR 1993

A Fellowship Program for Print or Broadcast Journalists and Editors Interested in Health Policy and Public Health.

This program is for both early- and mid-career journalists who are interested in designing an individual fellowship that will increase their understanding of complex public health and health policy issues, and their ability to communicate them. Fellowships will last for up to one year. Fellows can participate in the program on a full- or part-time basis. The program will offer an annual stipend of \$45,000 (prorated for length of actual fellowship).

Each fellow will work with the program's advisory committee to customize their fellowship plan. In most cases, fellows will participate in a field research project. Travel for research purposes is also available.

The application deadline is April 1, 1993.

For more information, write to:

Matt James
Communications Director
Kaiser Family Foundation
2400 Sand Hill Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025

The Kaiser Family Foundation is an independent health care foundation and is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries.

Kaiser Media Fellows Advisory Board:

Hale Champion, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Anne Gudenkauf, Senior Science Advisor, National Public Radio
David Perlman, Science Editor, *The San Francisco Chronicle*
Eileen Shanahan, Washington Bureau Chief, *St. Petersburg Times*

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS NEWSWIRE OF CHOICE IS
B U S I N E S S W I R E



BUSINESSWIRE
YOUR CONTACT WITH THE CHANGING WORLD!

More than 12,000 organizations depend on Business Wire to deliver their news to 2,100 news media around the country and an ever-increasing number around the globe.

24-Hours-A-Day Service

Business Wire is the only international media relations wire service with an office that's fully staffed 24-hours, every day of the business week and 14 hours on Saturday and Sunday, enabling us to deliver news to the media when it happens.

Diversity of Services to Deliver All Aspects of News

Business Wire is the wire of choice for business and financial news. And our special markets circuits include EntertainmentWire, SportsWire, AutomotiveWire, HealthWire, LegalWire and African-American, Hispanic and Asian media circuits.

For more information, call
800/221-2462 or 800/227-0845.

first quarter of 1988.

From January 1988 to January 1992, I voluntarily withdrew, as part of our agreement, from all active management of *The Record* when Byron Campbell was hired as president and publisher. Contracts were signed in late 1988 and early 1989 to build a satellite production facility with new offset presses to accommodate *The Record's* continuing growth in circulation and in pages per issue. Commercial borrowing peaked at \$107 million in 1992 due to the debt incurred for the construction and equipping of the satellite plant. I should note that \$17 million of the \$107 million borrowed from the two banks has been repaid as of this date.

Besides transposing the photos of my grandfather and father, other inaccuracies include a reference to Michael Aron's "recent" article about *The Record*, which was published in July/August 1991. In addition, I think it was blatantly unfair of Mr. Kurtz to take our high circulation average during the gulf war and the New York *Daily News* strike and compare it with the normal average, which, for the last three months of 1992, was 162,018 daily and 225,874 Sunday.

Finally, please let me quote from a January 14, 1993, letter to me from Mark Howat: "...I am appalled and embarrassed at one of the phrases attributed to me concerning you. I was interviewed for the piece more than fifteen months ago, so I cannot be certain I said precisely what is attributed.... There is considerable difference in having a drinking problem and being an alcoholic — a recovering one at that — and being referred to as a 'drunk.'"

For the record, I have not had any alcohol since May 13, 1991, and I doubt that anyone could truly refer to me as "walking around drunk for eight years" especially since, in that time frame, I have served as treasurer and president of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (1981 to present); was named Editor of the Year by the National Press Photographers Association (1985); served through all the chairs of the New Jersey Press Association (1986-1991); received the Owl Award for distinguished alumni achievement from the School of General Studies at Columbia University (1986), the Citizen's Award of the Academy of Medicine of New Jersey (1986), the first Whitney M. Young Award from the Bergen Council, Boy Scouts of America (1986), and Columbia University's highest honor given by the alumni, the Alumni Federation Medal (1991).

I admitted, in a bulletin board announcement to the entire staffs of *The Record* and *The News Tribune*, that I had come to realize I could no longer tolerate alcohol and that I would seek treatment. The notice was posted on May 16, 1991; I went away for treatment



TO TELL THE WHOLE STORY ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE...

CONTACT THE GLOBAL CLIMATE COALITION.

FOR ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC INSIGHT AND
A RESPONSIBLE VOICE FROM AMERICAN BUSINESS
ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.

**THE GCC PRESS OFFICE:
202-628-3622**

GLOBAL CLIMATE COALITION
1331 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., NW
SUITE 1500-NORTH TOWER
WASHINGTON, DC 20004-1703

GCC PRESS OFFICE
TEL: 202.628.3622
FAX: [202.639.8685]

NEW FROM THE WORLD-RENOWNED

B B C

FREE MAGAZINE, FREE CD

Nothing more
to buy, ever!

(see details below)

- Exclusive Magazine
- Exclusive CD
- Plus FREE
CD buying service

**Here's Good News
If You Enjoy Classical Music!**
The BBC announces this generous free offer to introduce its new, critically acclaimed service to American audiences.

It's a complete monthly guide to classical music... enjoyable writing, magnificent photographs, over 100 CD reviews and ratings, plus an exclusive CD that features an entire composition - most often performed by the internationally recognized BBC orchestras.

**Now You Can Be Among
The First To Experience It!**
This is an exclusive offer. Neither the magazine nor the CD are available anywhere else. But you can evaluate this remarkable program's BBC Music Magazine, and enjoy its accompanying classical compact disc today... without obligation. (Over, please...)

For membership,
call toll-free

**1-800
328-3900**

Dept. KAX
or mail the reply card.

'BBC' and the BBC logotype are trade marks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used under license



A COMPLETE
MONTHLY GUIDE
TO CLASSICAL MUSIC

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

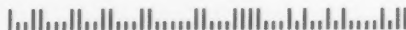
FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 22 TAMPA, FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

B B C

BBC Classical Music Service
Box 61099
Tampa, FL 33661-1099

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



NEW FROM THE WORLD-RENOWNED

B B C

FREE MAGAZINE FREE CD With nothing more to buy, ever!

A One-Of-A-Kind Concept Unlike Any Before!

Neither a club nor a "sampler" service, this program brings you...

1. The BBC Music Magazine.

With its broad scope and lively approach, this beautiful new magazine has enormous appeal for long-time collectors as well as to those just developing an interest in classical music. It covers all aspects of classical music - live, broadcast, and recorded - in equal depth. Over 100 luxurious pages of photographs, features and columns... plus over 100 new CDs reviewed and rated each month. Indubitably, a complete guide to classical music!

2. An Exclusive Full-Length CD.

With every issue of the BBC Music Magazine you will also receive each month, a full-length Compact Disc that is not available anywhere else... an entire featured work (not a compilation of short excerpts) recorded to the highest quality classical standards and handsomely packaged in a jewel case... not in a paper sleeve.



3. A Personal CD Buying Service.

You may order CDs reviewed in the BBC Music Magazine through the BBC Classical Music Service, if you wish. A convenient way to shop but never an obligation.

Add New Excitement To Your Collection!

The monthly CDs alone will add the cachet of exclusive, superbly recorded special performances to an already well-balanced collection. For the beginning classical library, they become the nucleus to build around. And the BBC Music Magazine's reviews and ratings of the latest CDs, and its features and columns will greatly enhance your knowledge and appreciation for classical music.

Satisfaction Guaranteed!

Simply phone toll-free or fill out the reply card for your free copy of the BBC Music

Magazine and free CD. Listen to the CD and read the magazine, if not satisfied for any reason, return them with no further obligation.

A COMPLETE MONTHLY GUIDE TO CLASSICAL MUSIC



Mail to: BBC Classical Music Service
Box 61099, Tampa, FL 33661-1099

Please send my FREE copy of *BBC Music Magazine* plus my FREE CD. Bill me for just shipping and handling. Thereafter, I will receive the *BBC Music Magazine* and an exclusive CD every month. As a member, I will always be guaranteed the low monthly price of \$4.98 plus shipping and handling.

I have no obligation to buy anything ever and I may cancel at any time.

☐ Check here if you prefer your monthly recordings on cassette.

(H1)

KAX

Name _____ (please print)

Address _____ Apt.# _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Have you bought anything by mail ☐ Last 6 months ☐ Year ☐ Never

We reserve the right to ask for additional information, reject any application, or cancel any membership. Limited to new members; one per family. Local tax, if any, will be added.

GUARANTEED PRICE PROTECTION.

As a member,
you will always be
guaranteed the
low price of \$4.98 plus
shipping and handling
every month.

For membership, call toll-free

1-800-328-3900
or mail the reply card. Dept. KAX

©1993 Warner Music Enterprises

June 2 to July 2, 1991, and have remained alcohol-free since I made the decision that I could not, and would not, continue to drink.

MALCOLM A. BORG
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
THE RECORD
HACKENSACK, N.J.

LOADED LANGUAGE

I am not involved with Pat Robertson, the California GOP, or Democrats. However, I do question the use of certain words in your January/February Laurel "to the outside-the-Beltway press."

Is it necessary to label Robertson's efforts a "stealthy" and "long-range scheme" when "plan" or "strategy" would be equally accurate and less sinister-sounding?

I also question the need for the last sentence in the Laurel: "By election day, millions of voters had been made aware of the hidden agendas of obscure entries from the secret stables of the Christian right."

Having a long-range strategy for getting persons elected to public office is not illegal in this country. This approach has, for example, been used by organizations such as Emily's List, NOW, various unions, and other groups for several years. It is also a smart political strategy that has been used by various ethnic and political minority groups. Are

their "plans" usually described as "stealthy schemes?"

The stories in the various papers mentioned are legitimate news. I have no quarrel with that. The words used in your Laurel were, however, the type of journalism that raises suspicions in the minds of readers about the leanings of journalists.

DAVID E. FOUNTAIN
NO ADDRESS PROVIDED

THE BATTLE BEHIND THE BOOK

Thank you for Stuart Schear's thoughtful review of my book *Acceptable Risks* in your January/February issue. But I am bothered by one prominent sentence amidst what I know was considerable flattery: "Unfortunately, Kwitny's account does not always live up to the standards by which he measures the work of others." When I read that opener, I got the awful chill every reporter has felt — Oh, God, I've made some horrible mistake. How relieved I was to read column after column and find no substantiation for this remark!

Nowhere does Schear cite a factual error in my book, or any fair comment or contrary viewpoint not accounted for. (Yes, he finds my brief afterword on policy recommendations to be too "libertarian," but that is opin-

ion, not reporting.)

I was surprised that Schear didn't share with CJR readers any of my examples, but I spelled out numerous specific harm-causing factual errors in science reporting, and showed in chapter and verse Gina Kolata's distortion of quotes, refusal to print refutation of her stories when offered, and refusal to look at videotaped evidence contradicting her. I also interviewed her and printed her comments, or lack of them. I held neither her nor anyone else to a standard other than my own.

As Schear acknowledges, Marty Delaney and Jim Corti are genuine heroes. But Schear also says *Acceptable Risks* comes too close to hagiography, and complains that my disclosure of the financial arrangements came in an afterword rather than a preface.

He might be interested to learn that I had to fight to publish a disclosure at all, and to defeat the attempts of editor Ann Patty of Poseidon Press and the in-house lawyers at Simon & Schuster to make the book a complete hagiography. While I gave in on some wording matters that didn't seem worth the fight, I held all significant ground and am convinced that everything in the book fairly represents the known facts.

JONATHAN KWITNY
CRANFORD, N.J.

XEROX

You can't Xerox a Xerox on a Xerox.

But we don't mind at all if you copy a copy on a Xerox copier.

In fact, we prefer it. Because the Xerox trademark should only identify products made by us. Like Xerox copiers and Xerox printing systems.

As a trademark, the term Xerox should always be used as an adjective, followed by a noun. And it is never used as a verb. Of course, helping us protect our trademark also helps you.

Because you'll continue to get what you're actually asking for.

And not an inferior copy.

Xerox
The Document Company

The Inside Stuff Without The Stuffiness

WALL STREET WEEK WITH LOUIS RUKEYSER

Little wonder it's America's longest-running—
and most popular—TV program about money.

Getting a handle on the economy has never
been so vital. Or so much fun!

For 23 years, through six Presidents, millions of
viewers have been happily discovering each week that
finance can be totally understandable—and
marvelously entertaining! They wouldn't miss their
delightful, informative weekly visit with America's
favorite economic commentator, Louis Rukeyser, and
his topflight guests. It's what keeps these viewers
consistently ahead of the crowd in the race for
financial survival.

Watch "Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser"
every Friday evening on PBS—and gain your own
place in the winner's circle!

Check your local Public Television listing for time
and channel.

A national production of Maryland Public Television

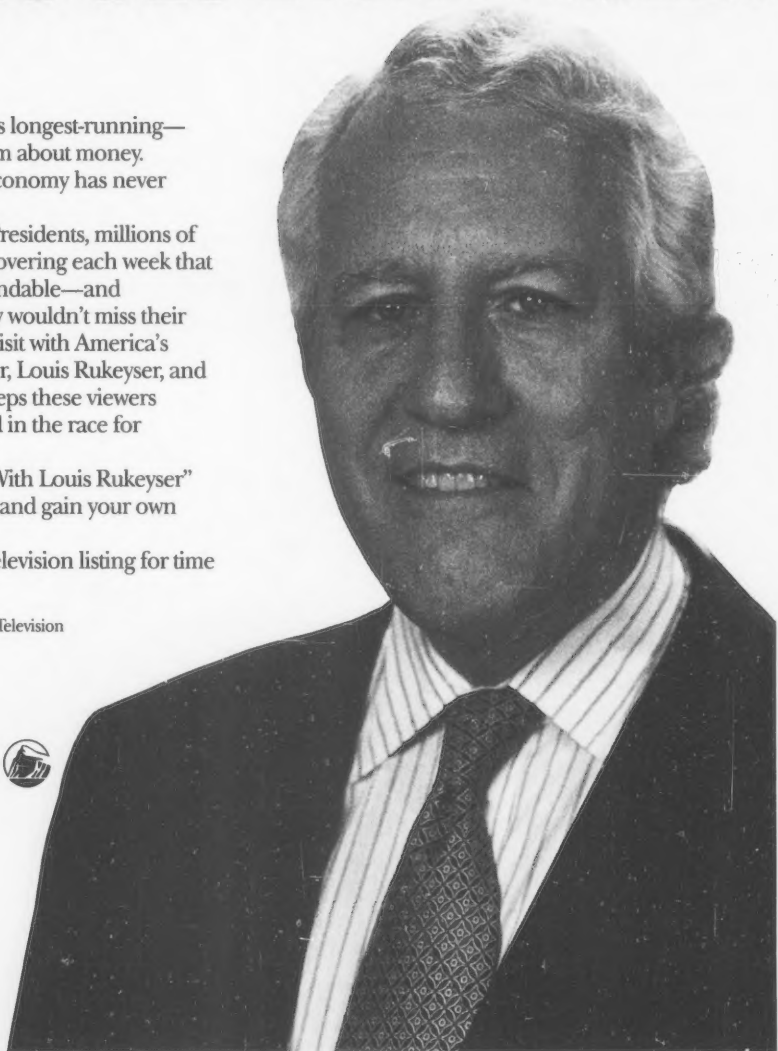
MPT

Underwritten nationally by:

Prudential Securities 

TheTravelers 

 **MFS**
The First Name in Mutual Funds • Since 1924



CHRONICLE

A SEA CHANGE ON THE AIRWAVES

The Shift in Government Alters Israeli TV

"I'd finally joined the club — I'd become a killer," said Negev Achi-Miriam, an Israeli medical student who described to a national public television audience in Israel his experience of shooting at teenage rock-throwing Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. He appeared on *Diary*, a week-in-review show that ran in prime time on a Friday night last December, when most families were just flicking on their TV sets after a big Sabbath meal. "The Israeli national cause is just," Achi-Miriam said. "But it's a mission impossible."

Only nine months ago, right-wing government ministers and appointees were fighting to keep discussions of this kind off the air, calling them "demoralizing." "There were things we knew wouldn't get past the administration," says Yoram Ronnen, a host of *Focus*, a news interview show, and a founder of Israel TV, the state-run network. "There was no point in even asking."

Under the Likud government, the hard-hitting *Diary* program had been moved to the less popular Saturday night slot because the leadership feared negative news just before the elections. The Labor party's June victory brought the program back to Friday night. More important, state-run Israeli tele-



After the Likud government fell, Israel TV got bolder, experimenting with such fare as a simulated Arab-Israeli summit that included Palestinian spokesmen and an Assad-Clinton-Rabin photo montage.

vision had a new ultimate boss in the newly elected government, and TV journalists — who, like other members of the Israeli media, tend to lean to the political left — suddenly were dealing with officials who spoke their language. One result was that they began implementing ideas they had toyed with for years: inviting Palestinians to talk-shows, interviewing the radical left, airing grimmer pictures from the territories.

Set up in 1968 and modeled after the BBC, Israel TV has new competition from cable, but it is still the leader when it comes to TV news, with its nightly report on Channel One watched by 60 percent of the potential viewers. The people who run it — the board of governors, the directorate, and the other administrators of the Israel Broadcasting Authority — are for the most part political nominees of the previous government who have actually remained in

place. Now, however, they no longer dare exercise their prerogative to make scheduling changes, take programs off the air, or criticize journalistic decisions. "There is a big change in the atmosphere," says Joseph Barel, director of Israel Television.

On January 21, for example, just after the repeal of the law prohibiting Israelis from meeting with members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Israel TV broadcast its first interview with Yasir Arafat. He called on Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to meet him, but Rabin declined. Another example was the live simulation in November of an Israeli-Arab summit meeting, complete with a pro-PLO representative for the Palestinians. Insiders say that previously it would have been impossible to invite someone like Ahmed Tibi, an Israeli Arab activist, to speak his mind on air.

On the *Tonight* talk show, host Gabi Gazit seated two Israeli widows whose husbands had been killed by Palestinians opposite the parents of a sixteen-year-old Palestinian shot to death by Israeli soldiers. The juxtaposition infuriated many viewers, and the

studio was flooded with irate phone calls. But Gazit's ratings have stayed high.

Pictures from the occupied territories, meanwhile, now show the startlingly violent street clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians, and for many Israelis they raise the specter of a no-win situation, particularly in Gaza. Use of the term "territories" has become permissible, an alternative to "Judea, Samaria, and Gaza," the biblical names insisted upon by former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Not all the changes can be attributed to the fall of the right and the journalists' tendency to lean left. To some degree, they are the result of manipulation by members of the new government coalition, along the lines of manipulation by the old one. A special commission recently concluded that members of parliament directly intervene in broadcasting decisions, and that, since the election, Israel TV has discriminated against the Likud and other right-wing parties.

"People who voted for the winning camp can now find expression for what they want to see," says Itzhak Roch, a member of the Hebrew University's department of journalism and communication and a veteran newscaster. "But this doesn't mean anything has changed in the basic structure."

Still, under the right and the left, Channel One has run programs highly critical of the government, especially on economic issues and corruption. Roch explains that politics go only so far in shaping news in Israel. He believes that public opinion serves as a counterweight to political bullying; others cite competition with the printed press and, since the arrival of cable, the foreign networks. "They know that if they promote a certain party or politician, criticism will soon follow," says Orit Galili, a columnist for *Ha'aretz*, Israel's most-respected daily.

Leora Frankel

Frankel, who works for The New York Times Jerusalem bureau, is a free-lance writer.

A PRE-MILLENNIUM PREVIEW OF GANNETT'S BIG CHANGES

There was a time, recalls Peter Clavelle, mayor of Burlington, Vermont, when he saw a reporter from *The Burlington Free Press* almost every day. Now, he says, "There are times when I go a full week without seeing a reporter."

"I probably shouldn't complain," he adds.

Anyway, complaining wouldn't change things. The *Free Press*'s city hall reporter has been instructed to spend more time talking to citizens and less to government officials. "We want to make sure readers have a voice," says editor Ron Thornburg, "and not just officials."

A Gannett newspaper, the *Free Press* is revamping its priorities, design, and reporting methods as part of the parent company's News 2000 initiative, a major effort to reshape all of Gannett's eighty-one papers. The plan was announced in June 1991. Nearly twenty months into it, the *Free Press*, at least, is a very different newspaper.

The first order of business was to solicit input from readers. Last summer the *Free Press* organized focus groups, handed out surveys at the local agricultural fair, and held "call-the-editor" and "meet-the-editor" nights. From some 2,500 responses, the paper culled a dozen "top community interests," and in a report to readers promised to refocus news coverage on them. The number-one reader priority was Taxes/Value in Government.

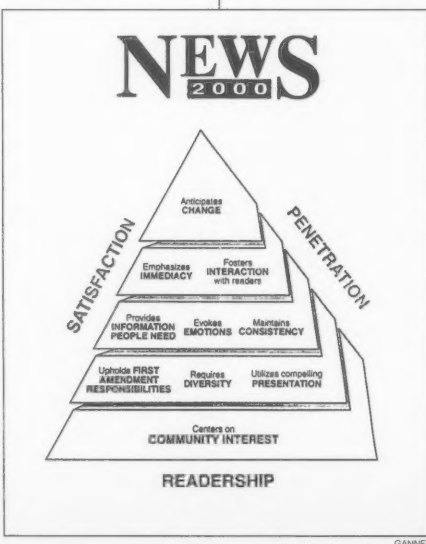
Readers, Thornburg wrote, "want us to answer this question in every government story: What value am I getting for my tax money?" The Recession was the second priority, followed by Changing Vermont — how growth and economic change are reshaping the state — and The Environment.

What the readers put in the fifth and sixth spots, interestingly, was Positive News — "everyday heroes who are making a contribution" — and Micro News — weddings, church bazaars, court actions, and the like. After that came The Health Care Crisis; The Schools; Politics; Parenting and The Family; Arts and Entertainment; and Sports/Recreation/Fitness. Editors say they take these priorities seriously as they assign and play stories.

One of the most dramatic changes at the *Free Press* is the effort to add the "reader's voice" to stories. A regular new feature is the "News Line Poll," in which readers call in their opinions to questions ranging from serious national issues to "Is the new phone book format easier or harder to use?" Readers also have been asked to submit questions for

candidate debates, and to address Vermont's economic malaise in a ten-week series on the Sunday editorial page.

To stay in touch, the paper has formed a reader advisory council and from time to time runs surveys. A heavily promoted twenty-four-hour telephone hot line invites readers to call in story tips or questions.



Mark Silverman, Gannett's director of News 2000, says that while all eighty-one papers in the chain are going through the News 2000 process, "it's handled differently and executed differently at each newspaper, and presumably the results are different." The *Free Press* has seen some circulation gains since News 2000 began — a 3.8 percent increase in Sunday circulation, to 68,162 — but Silverman says it is too early to determine if it is a business success in Burlington.

In the journalistic community, the reviews are mixed. Former *Free Press* reporter Kevin Ellis worries that the paper is crossing over into pandering. "They're trying to be popular, they're trying to be loved," he says. Some *Free Press* reporters, on the other hand, like the way the paper has been personalized. Sam Hemingway, a columnist and one of the paper's best reporters, isn't happy about the way the *Free Press* is using Gannett's "News 2000 Pyramid," (shown left), which the company calls a "management model of journalism." At the *Free Press*, the system is used to evaluate stories based on criteria such as "evokes emotions" and "anticipates change." "It takes what should be gut instincts in the news business and sort of creates a systematic scoreboard," Hemingway says.

The basic problem, say a number of *Free Press* critics, is the lack of resources — a small reporting staff with a big turnover rate. Although a full page is devoted to "The Edge," a News 2000 innovation featuring articles by local high school journalists, the critics say that the education beat is all but ignored.

"I do applaud that it is trying to understand what readers want. They are doing what newspapers rarely do," says Stephen C. Terry, former managing editor of the nearby Rutland, Vermont, *Herald*. "But on the basic and very important task — how they cover their local community — they have a lot of work to do."

Susan Youngwood

Youngwood, who worked at the *Free Press* from 1984 to 1987, is a free-lance writer based in Montpelier, Vermont.

Word's getting around...

"[Manufacturing] does more to create wealth for a broad range of the population than any other operations you could have...."

--Brian O'Reilly, Associate Editor, *Fortune*,
in *Minnesota Technology*, 3rd Quarter 1992

• •

"The fact that exports have continually outpaced expectations demonstrates what a competitive powerhouse the U.S. has become. The U.S. share of exports by all industrial countries has risen to more than 22% from 15.3% in 1986. Moreover, the sources of export growth ... bolster the case for optimism. The surge in merchandise exports over the past six years has come entirely in manufactured goods...."

--Al Ehrbar, *The Wall Street Journal*, 1/18/93

• •

"The productivity figures leave no doubt that American managers have learned the new techniques and learned them well. The Japanese on their home islands are studying American techniques again.... [they] are straining to integrate magic American words like 'innovation' and 'globalism' into their own work environment."

--Jerry Flint, *Forbes*, 1/18/93

• •

"Many U.S. companies that rely on technical and scientific research are stronger today than five years ago. They hold their own or boast a widening lead against foreign competitors in such bellwether industries as computers, software, aerospace, communications, chemicals and pharmaceuticals."

--G. Pascal Zachary, *The Wall Street Journal*, 12/14/92

Manufacturing helps America grow.

The Manufacturing Institute

An Affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW • Suite 1500, North Tower
Washington, DC 20004-1703

More information? Call Denny Gulino, Vice President, at: 202/637-3099 • Fax 202/628-3478

THE NEW BAD WORD

A Libel Settlement
Scares the First
Amendment Crowd



In some circles, calling a lawyer arrogant is — if not praise — as innocuous as calling a labor organizer strident or a lobbyist ingratiating. However, those circles do not include the California

courts, as *Business Week* magazine and its publisher, McGraw-Hill, recently learned.

The education was expensive. When McGraw-Hill agreed this winter to pay New York lawyer Robert F. O'Connor more than \$1.6 million to resolve confidentially his successful libel suit, it was only after a decade of litigation during which the magazine's top-flight legal defense sustained a trouncing in a jury trial, three disastrous appeals, and a futile petition to the state Supreme Court.

The winners as well as the losers have kept low public profiles, while the First Amendment community followed the case with considerable anxiety. One 1991 letter, an *amicus* brief bearing the names of counsel for The New York Times Company, Condé Nast Publications, Inc., and representatives of some 240 other publishers, asked the third court of appeals to reverse the jury verdict and noted, "There but for the grace of God go I."

The two defamatory sentences appeared in a *Business Week* sidebar

titled "How Kodak Lost the 1984 Olympic Sponsorship Race," which accompanied a February 1, 1982, cover story about Japan's challenge to Eastman Kodak's dominance.

The sidebar material came from Pamela Simons, an experienced reporter who interviewed Olympics organizing officials in their offices. The actual writing was done by her editor, Stuart Feldstein, who reported the cover story. Simons okayed his compressions, additions, and reorderings, and she took the extra step of calling the committee back to check the quotes (although she is unclear about whether she spoke again to the source who eight years later would deny using the word "arrogance").

The sidebar starts by stating that Kodak's attitude may have cost it a chance to be a sponsor of Los Angeles's Olympic Games. It quotes committee president Peter V. Ueberroth saying, "The problem was, Kodak felt it could do what it pleased." While most other sponsors cut their deals within three months, Ueberroth says, Kodak spent

The Hearst Corporation Congratulates



WCVB-TV

on the occasion of its second Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for
excellence in broadcast journalism.

The Silver Baton recognizes WCVB-TV's "extraordinary commitment to news and public affairs programming," as exemplified in NewsCenter 5's environmental reporting and *Chronicle*, its locally produced nightly newsmagazine.



WCVB-TV
BOSTON

Hearst is proud of WCVB for being an exemplar of the pursuit of excellence in local programming and for its high standard of service to the viewers of New England.


The Hearst Corporation

SOUND BITE

“The next logical step in the kind of journalism being practiced by *Inside Edition* would be for a person to go directly to the producers of the show before committing a crime, and ask how much a story would be worth. This would be useful in deciding whether to go ahead with it or not, based on the market value.

”

Newsday's Marvin Kitman, in a column about news reports that *Inside Edition* had paid to interview Amy Fisher, the Long Island teenager accused of shooting a woman whose husband she claimed to be having an affair with.

.....

twenty months haggling.

The passage concludes: “At one point, a Kodak attorney, picking over contract language, declared, ‘After all, this is Eastman Kodak,’ recalls Daniel D. Greenwood, who is in charge of sponsorships for the LAOOC. ‘It appeared to be a lack of enthusiasm, an arrogance.’”

The editor and the reporter were unaware that only one attorney/negotiator was involved: Robert O'Connor. His name did not appear in the piece, but his boss at Kodak made the connection, and on February 10 told him he was being fired for being too “visible.” It took O'Connor years to get another job, and it paid half the \$73,000 he had been making at Kodak.

Assessing his damages from his post-victory vantage point, O'Connor explains that “saying that I was arrogant and made Kodak lose out to Fuji would be like being identified as an attorney at General Motors who put the first Toyota on an American loading dock.”

At trial, Daniel Greenwood testified that, although he had volunteered the lawyer anecdote, Simons had put words in his mouth. Further, O'Connor's attorneys contended that the editing shifted

the focus of the sidebar so it could be read only as an indictment of a single individual who was a deal breaker — when in fact, they argued, the deal foundered over money.

The defense insisted on an alternative reading: the cover story was about Kodak's attitude problems, and the sidebar illustrated how the corporate arrogance of Kodak and its attorney lost the sponsorship. At worst, the magazine said, attributing the arrogance quote to Greenwood was a nonmaterial mistake. And it was consistent with the Olympics officials' opinions.

Two judges dismissed the suit as turning on statements of opinion. But two appellate panels, in 1984 and 1988, revived it as a mixture of fact and opinion. The third trial judge found no intent to damage O'Connor, ruling out punitive damages. Because O'Connor lived in New York and because *Business Week* is located there, the judge also adopted New York's uniquely stringent test for libel: O'Connor had to show that the magazine's conduct was grossly irresponsible. In October 1990, a Los Angeles jury found that the sidebar had libeled O'Connor and that he should be compensated for what he lost by not staying at Kodak until a presumed retirement in the year 2004.

An appellate panel affirmed. The U.S. Supreme Court's *Milkovich* ruling, which narrowed the opinion defense (see “How Scary Is Milkovich?” CJR, May/June, 1992), had come down just before the trial, but the panel ignored it. Rather, the 1992 appellate opinion focused on O'Connor's reading of the sidebar as indicting an individual rather than the entire corporation, and reasoned from there that *Business Week* should have given him a chance to defend himself.

At *Business Week* these days, “arrogant” is a red-flag word that insures copy will be run by the in-house lawyer, according to that lawyer, Kenneth M. Vittor. But beyond that, he adds, “it is hard to change your practices in anticipation of unintended and unforeseen interpretations about unnamed individuals.”

Gail Diane Cox

Cox is Los Angeles bureau chief of The National Law Journal.

ENERGY NEWS

The American Petroleum Institute represents more than 250 oil and natural gas companies involved in all sectors of the business. For oil and energy information please call :

API Public Relations
202-682-8120

Jim Craig
Public Relations Director

For regularly updated oil industry news, please call API's Newslines:

Weekly News & Actualities

1-800-787-NEWS

Oil Industry Facts • Statistics
Policy Issues • Technology
Energy Perspectives • Trends

American Petroleum Institute
1220 L St. NW
Washington, DC 20005

"PLEASE, HELP ME TO DIE . . ."

It's 3 a.m. You are awakened by the cries of someone you love, screaming with pain and despair. You run down the hall, hold a sponge to cracked lips—then you clean away the wastes and change the bed linen.

"What we've been talking about...will you help me do it now...?" The voice is barely audible. "Of course," you reply. Now, you must meet the most difficult challenge you have ever faced with your loved one.

Medical technologies often work overtime to sustain hopeless life. Grieving families look to medical professionals for answers that may never come.

What can you do when terminal illness and insurmountable pain have degraded life to a parody of itself? Shouldn't there be another way?

You can learn more about Hemlock. Write or call today. Ask for Introductory Packet H.



HEMLOCK SOCIETY USA
P.O. Box 11830
Eugene, OR 97440
800/247-7421

RUSSIAN ROBOTS



IRA FRIEDLANDER

"I have some secret information for you," whispered the Russian in a low, conspiratorial voice. I listened closely. The small man with the salt-and-pepper beard moved closer. The Russian words flew past me — something about a KGB video and a scandal in the military. "How much did you understand?" Boris asked suddenly. "Not much," I conceded. "But what will you do when you get a real scoop in Moscow?" he insisted. "You must know how to get the gist of the story when you don't know the whole language."

In the field of Russian language, fifty-three-year-old Boris Shekhtman is the closest thing to a modern-day czar. He holds forth in the finished basement of his home in suburban Rockville, Maryland. A small army of *matrioshka* dolls and assorted Russian trinkets (the kind that clutter every Moscow apartment) sit awkwardly on the modern American furniture. Old Russian textbooks lean against new American paperbacks. On the bottom shelf of one bookcase is a Scrabble set, with American letters on one side of the tiles and Cyrillic on the other.

The photographs hanging above Boris's desk include a shot of former Secretary of State George Shultz presenting Boris with an award for teaching. Another shows Boris with Francis X. Clines and Bill Keller of *The New*

Boris Shekhtman uses unusual methods, including exuberant singing, to teach journalists and others the Russian language.

York Times in their Moscow apartment. They are two of Shekhtman's "Russian Robots," so named because, he explains, "they are all trained in my methodology, which relies on computerization — drilling automatic Russian responses into their brains."

In a typical class, Boris draws Cyrillic letters on the blackboard, slowly pronouncing each syllable as it leaves his hand: "*Paf-ta-reet-e, pajalsta*," bellows Shekhtman. The student responds: "*M-edl-ena, pa-jaw-loo-sta*." Again and again the words are drummed in, drilled in, until the weary student can barely think of another phrase. The phrases literally mean Repeat, please, and Slowly, please. They are automatic speech patterns used by all of Boris's "robots" and they are designed to slow down and control the rapid-fire Russian dialect.

Felicity Barringer of *The New York Times* was one of Boris's first robots. She likens him more to a doctor or diagnostician than to a language teacher. "He analyzed my brain, made a template of the portion of my brain that learns language, and figured out what I could learn," Barringer says. "And it

was all custom-made to my needs."

"Boris could teach particle physics if he had to," claims Bill Keller, who went to Moscow in December 1986 for the *Times*. It was shortly after Gorbachev had begun releasing political prisoners, Keller recalls, a time when reporters tested the limits. "We all had these office translators who had been hired from the government," says Keller, who is now based in South Africa. "And so we assumed they were vetted by the KGB. If called upon, they'd probably inform. You couldn't take one of them on an interview to some god-forsaken place to meet someone who had just come out of a logging camp in Siberia, still with a prison haircut, shaved down to the scalp. The dissident would be uncomfortable, thinking the translator was KGB, and the translator would be uncomfortable with an 'enemy of the people.'" So Keller went alone.

"They [political prisoners] tended to be intellectuals whose language was, frankly, way above my head," Keller recalls. But Shekhtman had infused him with a sense of confidence and courage to "wing it." "I remember half-waiting for the political prisoner to stop me and say, 'You're not understanding a word I'm saying, are you?' It never happened."

Shekhtman prepares all his robots to swim in rough Russian-language waters. One way is by giving them "Islands." Islands can be anything from a few lines about oneself to a short monologue about the state of the world. They are the ultimate cocktail party savior — a few canned stories and well-rehearsed insights to keep the conversation going. "And they give the robot a chance to rest a bit or to think of how to change the topic," adds Boris.

In 1989, I was sent to gather material for an ABC News documentary on Russian women. My translator had finally managed to convince the beautiful blonde *prostitutka* outside the Cosmos Hotel to share her views on the "profession" with ABC. We found a quiet corner of the parking lot, out of view of the police, for the interview. While waiting for the camera crew to set up, my translator wandered off. The young woman grew restless and began to eye the door of the hotel. I couldn't tell if she was looking for business or

SOUND BITE

"In due course, many former Soviet intelligence officers will be opening their big mouths — for pay, for fame, or for whatever reason. Some of what they think they know will be true; some will not be. The same holds for their files.... Western news organizations have to proceed very cautiously here lest some reputations be needlessly ruined.

"

Richard Cohen in the *Washington Post*, in an article — FAST AND LOOSE AT TIME — on *Time* magazine's December story about former *Post* Moscow bureau chief Dusko Doder. The *Time* piece included second-hand allegations from a KGB defector (who later returned to Moscow) that Doder had taken \$1,000 from a KGB agent.

fearful that the *militia* might chase us away. We were running out of time and I could see our scoop slipping away. My co-producer looked helplessly at me, asking, "You know Russian — can't you stall?" I remembered my Islands. The woman listened attentively as I rambled on about myself, my work, life in America — all the pre-packaged material I had in my computer.

Eventually, I did run out of Islands, and our translator was still nowhere in sight. Then I remembered another of Boris's techniques. Shekhtman teaches his robots how to ask perfect questions in Russian, even if they barely understand the answers. "Let's begin the interview," I pronounced confidently. The cameraman and co-producer seemed stunned. Nonetheless, they began rolling. I activated the interview using words so often rehearsed in Boris's basement. "*Pacheemoo prostitutzia?*" (Why prostitution?) "*Skol-ka?*" (How much?) "*Gde?*" (Where?) "*Kagda?*" (When?)

The interview went well and was subsequently aired on ABC, minus one exchange. Asking how Russians felt about sex for money, I got my prepositions mixed up, using the word for "with" instead of "for." Looking startled, the young woman asked in return, "*V-Amer-eek-e 'sex' za d-en-g-ee?*" (In America they perform sex with money?) Later, back in Maryland, my goof was repaired in Boris's basement.

Tara Sonenshine

Sonenshine is editorial producer of ABC News Nightline. She is currently studying Russian at Shekhtman's Specialized Russian Training Center in Rockville, Maryland.

CHEAP AIR

Hard Times for Public Radio Producers

Within a few hours of composer John Cage's death last August, free-lance producer Barrett Golding, in Bozeman, Montana, was talking to an editor at National Public Radio in Washington,

D.C. The editor wanted to know if Golding's previously assigned September birthday tribute to Cage could be reworked as an on-air obituary.

"Fortunately," recalls Golding, "I was running uncharacteristically ahead of schedule." That Saturday, the Cage memorial became part of *All Things Considered*, the network's acclaimed news magazine, which goes out to some 1.5 million listeners.

Unlike such familiar NPR staff members as Cokie Roberts, Bob Edwards, and Susan Stamberg, Golding is one of several hundred journalists who toil in relative obscurity yet are largely responsible for public radio's distinctive, award-winning sound. "I think that the work of non-station-based independent producers is frequently what listeners remember most and best about NPR," says Golding, a onetime ski bum.

"Free-lancers often provide half of what my desk puts on the air, and sometimes even more," says Larry Abramson, NPR's national desk editor. "They produce some of the most creative, daring, and unusual things we broadcast."

Enhance Your Career As You Complete Your Master's Degree On The Weekends

The American University School of Communication and the Office of Continuing Studies offer two weekend graduate programs in communication. The programs give students the opportunity to network with other professionals in their field and with nationally known faculty and practitioners. *Earn your degree in two years.*

- *M.A. in Journalism & Public Affairs*
- *M.A. in Public Communication*
for public relations professionals

For More Information
University Programs Advising Center
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016-8080
(202) 885-2500



An equal opportunity/affirmative action university



ROB OUTLAW

John Dinges, managing editor of news at NPR, says that "independents provide some of the best long-form documentary and arts programming available," citing as an example Sandy Tolan's recent series on indigenous cultures in the Americas, and David Isay's inside look at prisons.

Some NPR-distributed shows, such as the weekly environmental series, *Living on Earth*, and the news and arts program *Crossroads*, are almost entirely produced by independents. Over at NPR's rival, Minneapolis-based American Public Radio (APR), independents contribute heavily to *Marketplace*, *National Native News*, and *Soundprint*, among other shows.

If free-lance radio journalists are meeting with success in getting their work aired, they're having a hard time on another front — getting decent pay for it. What's missing is money.

NPR typically pays \$55 for each minute of air time produced by an independent. Even the best free-lancer, working on assignment, cannot expect more than \$100 per minute for stories that rarely exceed seven minutes. A brief story can take several days to create; the network, meanwhile, expects producers to buy their own equipment, cover their own expenses, and create a finished product in their own studios. *MonitorRadio*, a unit of the Christian Science Publishing Society that produces several daily news programs distributed by APR, pays \$50 per produced minute for "unlimited and perpetual rights" to audio material. APR's *Marketplace*, a

Independent producers like Barrett Golding are vital to public radio, but low pay is forcing many of them out.

weekday business news magazine, has a \$45-per-minute minimum.

NPR has not approved an across-the-board acquisition payment increase in more than six years. A 1991 proposal to boost per-minute minimum rates from \$45 to \$75 was knocked down, and the network's producers were rebuffed in their demands for standardized kill fees.

In November, many of the 400 members of the Association of Independents in Radio came together in Fort Worth for the first national radio producers' conference in eight years. According to results of an AIR-sponsored survey released at the gathering, some of the top contributors to NPR and other public radio services are seriously considering a change in career as a direct result of the industry's meager payment rates.

AIR's survey found members' single most important organizational interest was in having their collective needs represented before public radio networks and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the quasi-governmental organization that supports public radio and television. So far, the group has stopped short of advocating unionization.

Richard Mahler

Mahler is an independent radio and print journalist based in Santa Fe. From 1986 to 1989, he was TV critic for NPR's Morning Edition.

CANADIAN CHILL ?

Government as Critic

In any free society, the idea of the government passing judgment on the work of journalists is repellant. Canada is certainly a free society; thus, it came as a shock to the country's journalistic community when, late last year, the Senate held unprecedented hearings that scrutinized a series of docudramas, called *The Valour and The Horror*, about the role Canada's armed forces played in World War II. The films, made by independent producers Brian and Terence McKenna, had been shown early last year on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's public television network.

The most controversial episode focused on the air war against Germany. It portrayed the British commanders of the units in which Canadian fliers served as secretly and deliberately bombing civilian targets in order to kill as many civilians as possible and break Germany's morale. According to the film, the commanders who ordered these raids knew that many of the planes and their crews would be lost.

The format itself was controversial: the filmmakers used interviews with Canadian veterans and other participants in the war, but mixed them freely with dramatic scenes in which actors represented real people. Fierce protests by veterans groups triggered not only the investigation by the Senate's subcommittee on veterans' affairs but also one by the CBC's ombudsman, an office the publicly owned network created to deal with public complaints about programming.

Ombudsman William Morgan made his thirteen-page report public in November. The series, he found, "fails to measure up to the CBC's demanding policies and standards.... The problem is that the case against the leadership is for the most part not proven. The secrecy was either understandable in the context of the time or not evident to others than the program-makers. And much of what the narrator claims to be revealing

has been known for some time."

The ombudsman also took issue with the use of dramatizations: "Even if one takes the position that, because a number of the people the producers considered necessary for the audience to hear from are dead, the use of drama segments to present their words may be justified, one cannot avoid the fact that the use of drama in these programs had the effect of helping to create other serious problems and distortions."

The McKennas, who declined to appear before the senators, reacted angrily to the ombudsman's report, calling it "a clear example of why no one person should sit in judgment and decide whether complex programs are 'right' or 'wrong.'" The furor over the film soon became a national issue, covered extensively in the media.

The Globe and Mail, a paper with a nationwide readership, fiercely attacked government interference in a November 12 editorial. "That a Senate committee should be conducting a formal investigation of a work of journalism is shameful enough," it said. "Senators are, of course, free to hold whatever opinion they like, and express it in the same way as any other citizen. But to compel witnesses to come before public hearings to answer their 'charges' is another thing entirely. This is no innocent encounter ... and its sole design is intimidation. It would be an abuse of their position if the subject were an article in *The Globe and Mail*; it is doubly so when the institution in question is a creature of government, nominally independent but beholden to it for almost \$1 billion annually."

Not all journalists agreed. George Bain, a former columnist at *The Globe and Mail*, wrote in his Media Watch column in *Maclean's*, "If public inquiry into anything put in the public domain by the media is censorship, intimidation, an invasion of freedom of the press; if the CBC's ombudsman, a recent acquisition, constitutes a kangaroo court and an unwarranted restraint on freedom of expression; if the media as a whole holds the idea that freedom of the press exists only to serve the press, we arrive at a situation in which the free, vigorous debate, for which freedom of the press is supposed to exist, precludes debate on where free-

dom of the press becomes an abuse."

CBC President Gerard Veilleux, for his part, also criticized the Senate's involvement, but defended the ombudsman's assignment. "From the very beginning we have refused to take part in those [parliamentary] hearings, and from the beginning we have said publicly that we did not feel it was appropriate for the Senate to be conducting the hearings.

"At the same time," he said, "we must ensure that any program we broadcast is fully defensible in terms of its adherence to the corporation's journalistic policies and practices. In so doing, we strengthen our journalistic independence and credibility."

Next, a government agency with regulatory power over television stations got into the act. But the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, something like the American FCC, came out in defense of *The Valour and The Horror*. Responding to the more than 100 complaints it had received about the documentary, the CRTC ruled it acceptable under the terms of Canada's Broadcasting Act, and found that the filmmakers "appear to have reasonable grounds for the assertions made in the series." Filmmaker Brian McKenna, while noting that he does not believe "any government agency should be judging any television program's content," nonetheless found the CRTC's

ruling "satisfying."

The Valour and The Horror, meanwhile, is to be rebroadcast; a date has yet to be set.

Martin Krossel

Krossel lives in Toronto.

FOLLOW-UP

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE

Michael Koretzky had a secret. A reporter covering the plain-vanilla town of Boynton Beach, Florida, for the Tribune Company's *Sun-Sentinel*, he started his own little paper in Palm Beach without his bosses knowing about it. But that didn't last long.

Koretzky, using the pen name Michael Ross, started publishing *Ice Magazine* in September 1991. Distributed at sixty bars and trendy night spots, it soon grew to 5,000 circulation. *Ice* served up features on such subjects as Palm Beach's Nazis (IN THIS COUNTY, THE ARYAN NATIONAL FRONT HAS MORE MONEY, MORE SOPHISTICATION, MORE ATTITUDE, AND A TAN), local news with a sassy slant, and, once, a page of light-bulb jokes.

Sun-Sentinel higher-ups learned Koretzky's secret in January 1992. Citing a potential conflict of interest, they told him to quit publishing. There was talk of firing him. Later, he resigned to become a grant writer and run *Ice* on the side. But on the day he was to leave, July 29, the two sides reached an understanding. The *Sun-Sentinel* agreed to buy the paper; Koretzky would keep editorial control and have the right not to wear socks to work, as his agreement with the company explicitly states.

The new *Ice* was scheduled to hit the newsstands in February. The new owner is the same company that two years ago started the "alternative" *XS*, run out of the *Sun-Sentinel*'s office tower in downtown Fort Lauderdale (see "Alternative Strategy," *CJR*, July/August 1991). *Ice* will be run out of a storefront.

Sally Deneen

Deneen lives in Fort Lauderdale.

SOUND BITE

"Flak jackets do not protect the wearer from sniper and rifle fire — a major concern in the Balkans. Therefore, it has become standard issue to add 'hard up-armor' plates to the front and back pockets of the vest, each of which adds another ten pounds to the weight (but they do offer protection from sniper fire)."

From *Journalists Advisory on the Former Yugoslavia: How to Survive and Still Get the Story*, put out by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

HOW TO INFLUENCE A MILLION

Advertising in the seven magazines of The Leadership Network

OF THE

can get your message to a million of the most influential consumers in America.

BEST READ,

Our readers represent the best of the best in business, public

MOST INTELLIGENT,

policy, technology,

WELL EDUCATED,

culture, media, and international

PERCEPTIVE,

affairs. They are thinkers, planners, and doers,

TALENTED,

determining what the rest of us will be thinking, talking

SOPHISTICATED,

about, and doing tomorrow.

DISCERNING,

And, as leaders, they represent a unique type of

CULTURED, AND

consumer. A consumer who

WEALTHY

demand—and can afford—only the highest quality. A consumer

CONSUMERS

who wants to know more about what he buys and the

IN THE COUNTRY

companies he does business with.

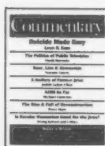
The Leadership Network lets you reach more of this intelligent, affluent audience than any

single prestige publication. So, when you need to talk to them, talk to us:



212-686-1734

Detroit 313-642-2885, Washington, DC 202-547-8488, West Coast 714-759-3450



JUDGMENT CALL

I DO SUBSCRIBE
OR NOT TO
SUBSCRIBE?



Why, to **subscribe**, of course! (Don't you wish all the judgments you have to make on the job were this easy?)

- ☐ Yes, I made the right choice. Send me a year of CJR (6 issues) for only \$19.95.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Please bill me

Add \$4 for foreign subscription.
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first copy.

E506



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

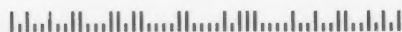
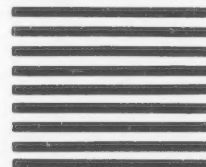
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 636 MARION, OHIO

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**COLUMBIA
JOURNALISM
REVIEW**

P.O. BOX 1943
MARION, OH 43306-2043



ARTS AND LAURELS

◆ **DART** to *Newsday*, for a curious case of reportus interruptus. In June 1991, the paper gave passionate play to the indictment of a prominent Puerto Rican businessman on charges of fraudulently disguising the source of \$32,000 in contributions to New York Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato's reelection campaign. In June 1992, the paper went all the way, sending a staff reporter to cover the trial in San Juan of D'Amato's "pal" in exquisitely loving detail, from its beginning on June 16 to its end on June 25, when a deadlocked jury forced the judge to call a mistrial and order a new trial in the fall. But when, on November 18, the second trial concluded with the decision by the judge to throw out the case because of lack of evidence, *Newsday's* ardor cooled, and it quietly withdrew: for twenty-eight days the paper stayed silent on the outcome of the case. Not until December 15, four days after running a Sydney Schanberg Viewpoints column that strongly implied the dismissal of the case had been "rigged," did *Newsday* report in a straightforward way that D'Amato's pal had been cleared.

◆ **DART** to the *Los Angeles Times*, for Rip Van Winkle journalism. In an op-ed feature that strongly suggested its editors had slept through the past twenty years undisturbed by the thunder of half the nation's citizens making their voices heard, the *Times* on November 23 put the question, "Should America Use Military Force in Bosnia?" to what it characterized as "a number of people" — writers, professors, historians, commentators from around the country — all ten of whom were men. Evidently the *Times's* editorial page editor had been less than bowled over by a report sent to him directly by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, whose chairman — an expert in international affairs and social welfare, and a resident of L.A. to boot — had recently returned from a WCRWC fact-finding expedition to Croatia and Bosnia. (Whether any of the men whose opinions the *Times* solicited had ever set foot in Bosnia could not be ascertained.)

◆ **LAUREL** to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and reporters Ted Wendling and Dave Davis, for "Lethal Doses: Radiation That Kills," a searing examination of

medical treatment gone wrong — needlessly, hopelessly, tragically wrong — and the pathological failure of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to do anything about it. Based on a computer-assisted review of more than 10,000 pages of state and federal records obtained under Freedom of Information laws, as well as on more than 150 interviews with doctors, lawyers, government officials, and radiation victims, the five-part series (December 13-17) detailed case after case in which shoddy machinery and sloppy procedures had led to disfigurement and death — twenty-eight such deaths in one Columbus hospital alone — shrouded or buried by hospital administrators and the federal agency created to oversee the civilian uses of nuclear materials. By the time the series ended, Congress had announced two immediate investigations and the NRC had promised reform. As the agency's chairman said of the series to a reporter from *The New York Times*, "They're telling us stuff we didn't know."

◆ **DART** to the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* and publisher Ashton Phelps, Jr., for radical treatment of "Lethal Doses: Radiation That Kills," the life-saving series (see above) published by its sister Newhouse paper, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, and distributed through Newhouse News Service to its twenty-five members around the country. Phelps's wife, a radiologist who appears to have been following the protocol suggested in a December 11 memo by the American College of Radiology in anticipation of the unwelcome publicity, had complained to Newhouse that distribution of the series would frighten away patients. In response, Newhouse editor Deborah Howell wrote: "Our aim in distributing this series was not to keep people from having needed treatment, but in seeing that the treatment they had was well administered." Evidently the radiologist's husband did not agree: the series did not appear in the *Times-Picayune*.

◆ **DART** to the Tacoma, Washington, *Morning News Tribune*, for flunking a full-disclosure test. When the outgoing governor's budget office, confronting a \$1.4 billion shortfall, decided in November that, pending the arrival of the new administration, it would temporarily withhold, among other funds, a \$3.3 million appropriation to the

Higher Education Coordinating Board for the planning and design of three new branch campuses of the state university, the *News Tribune* zeroed in on the issue with an editorial spitball. Headlined BEANCOUNTERS VS. BRANCH CAMPUSES, its November 23 editorial blasted the "lame-duck budget bureaucrats" and bemoaned their "end run around democracy" — but forgot to mention that the Higher Education Coordinating Board (twice referred to in the editorial with utmost respect) counts among its recently appointed members one Kelso Gillenwater, publisher of the *News Tribune*.

◆ **LAUREL** to the *San Diego Union-Tribune* and reporters Joe Cantlupe, David Hasemyer, and Mark T. Sullivan, for "Death with Indignity," a blood-curdling exhumation of the California funeral industry's dirty little secrets. Drawing on thousands of pages of documents and hundreds of interviews with industry experts, funeral workers, and aggrieved consumers, the five-part series (December 6-10) unearthed a deadly pattern of botched embalmings, dental-gold thefts, misplaced corpses, mass cremations, and manipulative (if not fraudulent) hard-sell tactics by an increasingly corporatized, decreasingly service-minded industry that motivates its people to, as one employee manual puts it, SELL SELL SELL and CLOSE CLOSE CLOSE with promises of vacations, diamonds, and "Golden Shovel" awards. While pointing a particularly critical finger at Service Corporation International, the nation's largest chain, the series saved its most damning digs for the state's "do-nothing" regulatory agencies, which for decades have kept their eyes closed to the rising mound of complaints.

◆ **DART** to *Cincinnati Magazine*, for an unseemly rush to judgment. In the introduction to its October cover story — 18 pages of "Best and Worst" awards to city restaurants, bars, rock bands, toy shops, makeover artists, reporters, and the like — the magazine explained that decisions had been made after "sorting through thousands of nominees for Best & Worst Awards from readers and from our own files." It did not explain, however, how its award for best "roast" — which went to "The Society of Professional Journalists' fundraiser starring the *Enquirer's* incomparable Jim Knippenberg and billed as a 'Gala Night of Booger Jokes'" — could have gone to a September 25 event which, at the time of the issue's printing on September 22, had not yet taken place. Nor did it explain that Laura Pulfer, the magazine's editor and publisher, was one of the celebrity "roasters" and that Felix Winternitz, the magazine's editorial director, co-chaired the event. (Winternitz, by the way, also chairs the ethics committee of the Queen City chapter of SPJ.)

◆ **LAUREL** to Knight Ridder news service and national correspondent Charles Green, for "Promises, Promises," an easy-to-read, à la carte menu of all the rhetorical sweetmeats served up by Bill Clinton in the course of his '92 campaign. Assembled from the candidate's speeches, debates, and published writings, and presented, in soup-to-nuts fashion, under thirty-five categories ranging from abortion, agriculture, and arms control through energy, environment, and ethics to tax cuts, tax increases, and trade, Green's impressive January 17 spread — some 205 offerings in all — provides both public and press with plenty to chew on over the next four years.

◆ **DART** to the *Houston Post*, for wronging a writer while righting a wrong. Among the several items in the January 12 edition promoting an all-day, *Post*-sponsored Women of Distinction Leadership seminar to be held at the Galleria Hotel on January 13 was a two-paragraph news report that erroneously placed the seminar on January 12. Fearing that the p.r. event — whose agenda included a session on "Marketing, Promotion, and PR" — would turn into a p.r. disaster for the *Post*, city editor Andrew Oppmann came up with an innovative plan: he hastily assigned the hapless reporter who had filed the inaccurate story to stand all day outside the Galleria holding a sign and handing out corrective flyers to passersby.

(Although the incident was brought to the attention of the National Association of Black Journalists, the group decided to take no action.) "The city editor says the only reason he turned his reporter into a walking correction," reported the alternative *Houston Press*, "was that 'it was a *Post*-sponsored event and our marketing department did quite a bit of work on it.'" The *Press*, whose gleeful account had unfortunately mangled Oppmann's name, captured the essence of his concept in the next issue when (above) it set the record straight.



This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

CJR FAX POLL: NBC'S DATELINE DISASTER

In February, NBC apologized to General Motors for having used sparking devices in footage, in a *Dateline NBC* report, that purported to show a GM truck bursting into flame as the result of a collision. The report itself, as well as the subsequent apology, prompted a good deal of discussion in the journalistic community. As a means of continuing that discussion, CJR would welcome your response to the following questions:

If you saw the report or have read extensively about it:

1. Do you think that — the crash-test footage aside — it fairly described the dangers of GM pickups built between 1973 and 1987, the models referred to on the program as "rolling fireballs"? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Would the story have worked without the crash-test footage? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Would the crash-test footage have been journalistically acceptable if use of the sparking devices had been disclosed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

And, in general:

4. Do you think there is excessive pressure on news organizations to produce sensational images? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Do you think the *Dateline* incident was an isolated one? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Were you ever asked — or tempted — to cross the line in a similar way? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Please describe.
.....
.....
.....

CJR FAX: (212) 854-8580

Or mail to: CJR Fax Poll, 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027



More of the best of
the *Columbia Journalism Review's*
The Lower case
has been collected in an entertaining
paperback published
by Perigee Books



700A Journalism Building,
Columbia University, New York, NY 10027

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

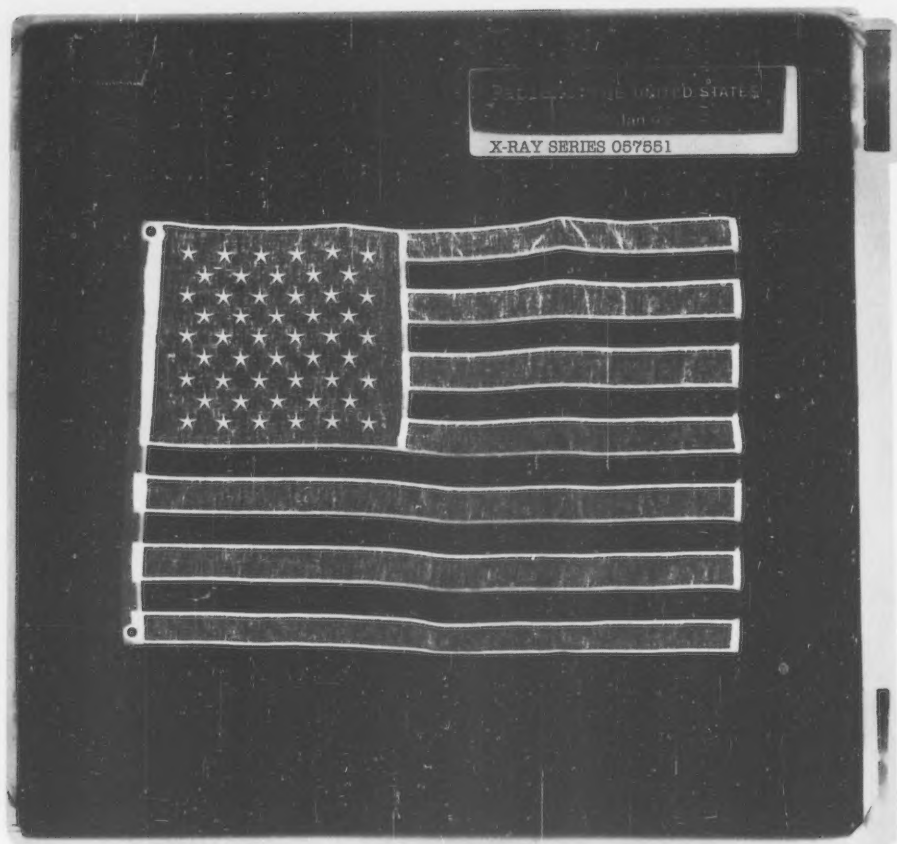
☐ Please renew my current subscription for 3 years at \$47.95.
I will receive, FREE, a copy of **RED TAPE HOLDS UP NEW BRIDGE**. \$ _____

☐ Please send me _____ copies of **RED TAPE HOLDS UP NEW BRIDGE**
at \$7.50 per copy (includes first class postage and handling). \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

PAYMENT MUST BE ENCLOSED

Please attach mailing label from current issue of the *Review*.
Allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.



What this country needs is health care that's been given a thorough examination.

Legislation for health care reform may be the toughest decision the 103rd Congress will ever have to make. A national magazine compared it to a process as complicated as overhauling the old Soviet economy. But it is long overdue.

As we see it, whatever legislation is enacted, certain criteria are essential for truly effective health care reform.

Does it provide guidelines for appropriate care?

Two patients with the same diagnosis who live in different

communities shouldn't be treated differently. Both patients should be treated based on the best clinical knowledge available. In the past there has been little review of the appropriateness of individual treatments. In fact, some medical experts have concluded that up to 30 percent of all medical procedures may not be worthwhile.

We believe there should be explicit guidelines developed to determine which particular medical procedures produce the best patient outcomes, and which do not.

Does the plan encourage preventive care?

A plan that only provides benefits once a person has become sick, doesn't make much sense. Checkups, tests, and other measures that help people stay healthy are much more effective and a lot less expensive than treating people after they become ill.

Does it improve the delivery of health care?

The current incentive to provide more services rather than use medical resources more

efficiently is a major reason why health care costs are well on their way to absorbing 18 percent of the economy by the year 2000.

The goal, as we see it, is to make sure all Americans receive quality health care at an affordable cost.

After all, the patient is us.

To find out more, write:
New Approaches to Health Care,
The Prudential, 751 Broad St.,
16th Fl., Newark, NJ 07102.

The Prudential 

©1993 The Prudential Insurance Company of America

STICKING WITH THE UNION?

From the New York *Daily News* to the *Los Angeles Times*, The Newspaper Guild is fighting for its future; the prospects are a lingering death or a painful rebirth. *by Stephen J. Simurda*

It was a pretty good news day for a tabloid like the New York *Daily News*. On January 13, allied forces once again attacked Iraq and, on nearby Long Island, a ten-year-old girl was found imprisoned in a secret basement "dungeon" in the house of a male family friend. But in a smoky and dreary auditorium in Times Square, more than 200 members of The Newspaper Guild had a different story on their minds. A week earlier, Mortimer Zuckerman, the new owner and latest savior of the money-losing *Daily News*, had informed a third of the 540 guild-covered employees that they no longer had jobs. The firings were not done on the basis of seniority, and many longtime staffers were out on the street. Guild officials said the cuts involved nearly half of the union's shop stewards and three-quarters of its negotiating committee. And many of those who remained at the paper were asked to accept wage cuts. To the guild the message was clear: Zuckerman was trying to bust their union.

So it was not a happy group that gathered within the dark-brown walls of the Heywood Broun Room at the offices of the New York Newspaper Guild a week after the firings. When the standing-room-only crowd was told that

the Reverend Al Sharpton, possibly the most controversial public figure in New York, supported them and would be willing, if necessary, to provide the manpower for a blockade of *Daily News* delivery trucks in Brooklyn, a cheer rose in the room.

"We're like a boxer in the fifteenth round of a fight who's been knocked down twice and even the manager wants to throw in the towel," said Juan González, a columnist and guild activist who tried to stir the crowd. "But we've got to take it to the limit with this guy." Nevertheless, the discussion turned to buyout offers, severance battles, and medical insurance, and the meeting soon took on an air of resigned disgust. González himself took a buyout offer from the *News*, but later changed his mind and stayed.

Even taking it to the limit with Zuckerman isn't likely to get many of the lost jobs back. The strategy devised in January involved a boycott of his publishing ventures (including *U.S. News & World Report* and *The Atlantic*), and attempts to dig up dirt on his significant real estate holdings. But these measures were designed primarily to force Zuckerman to negotiate a contract with the guild, rather than to get back the 180 jobs. It was clear that the new owner was holding most of the cards, since he already had deals with

every other union at the paper — ruling out the possibility of a successful strike by the guild.

Barry Lipton, president of the New York guild, acknowledges that his top priority at the *News* has become simply saving the guild unit at the paper. "It's an extraordinarily difficult position to be in," he says.

The *Daily News* situation is dramatic, but The Newspaper Guild is in an extraordinarily difficult position all over the map. Like most unions, it has been battered by unsympathetic political and economic conditions over the last decade or so. There is also plenty of criticism to be leveled at guild leadership; and there is now an unprecedented level of dissent within the industry's largest labor union. At the same time, the publishing industry is increasingly ruled by conglomerates whose bottom-line emphasis often means pushing the guild harder to accept big contract concessions.

Facing these and other challenges, many of which will only get tougher as the decade draws to a close, The Newspaper Guild is suffering through what is probably the greatest threat to its future since its founding by Broun and others in 1933.

The 1990s could see the demise of the guild or its rebirth. The challenge is essentially this: Can the union stop a

Stephen J. Simurda is a free-lance writer and a member of the National Writers Union.



Mortimer Zuckerman (above) took over the New York Daily News in January. His hard-line approach to the guild has angered members, some of whom are not happy with their union leaders either.

dramatic decline in membership, revenues, and influence and find a vision and sense of mission that will help it succeed through the 1990s and beyond? There are several reasons the question must be asked, and answered, now.

■ Guild membership in the United States and Canada hit a peak of 34,828 in 1987, but has declined rapidly ever since. Guild officials put the number at 31,000 in 1992 and admit that this year it could easily drop below that for the first time in twenty-five years.

■ The guild has not organized a new shop of any significant size in the United States since 1989.

■ During that time there has been a spate of decertifications of the guild at papers ranging from Tacoma, Washington, to Santa Barbara, California, to Great Falls, Montana.

■ The decrease in membership has meant less revenues. The guild's international headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, shed four of its seventeen jobs last year due to budget constraints.

■ Dissent is high, with two internal groups — Concerned Guild Members and the Coalition for Constructive Change — seeking to oust existing leadership. In addition, the Southern Ontario local, a strong unit with 3,000 members, wants to leave the guild and affiliate with a Canadian labor union.

"What's missing is a more aggressive stance — more aggressive in dealing with publishers and more aggressive in organizing," says Bruce Meachum, administrative officer for the Denver local of the guild and a founder of the

Coalition for Constructive Change.

"The current guild leadership is not capable of leading the union in the future," says González, a co-chair of Concerned Guild Members, the more activist of the two new insurgent groups. "It's not that they're evil or corrupt; they're just not very smart or capable."

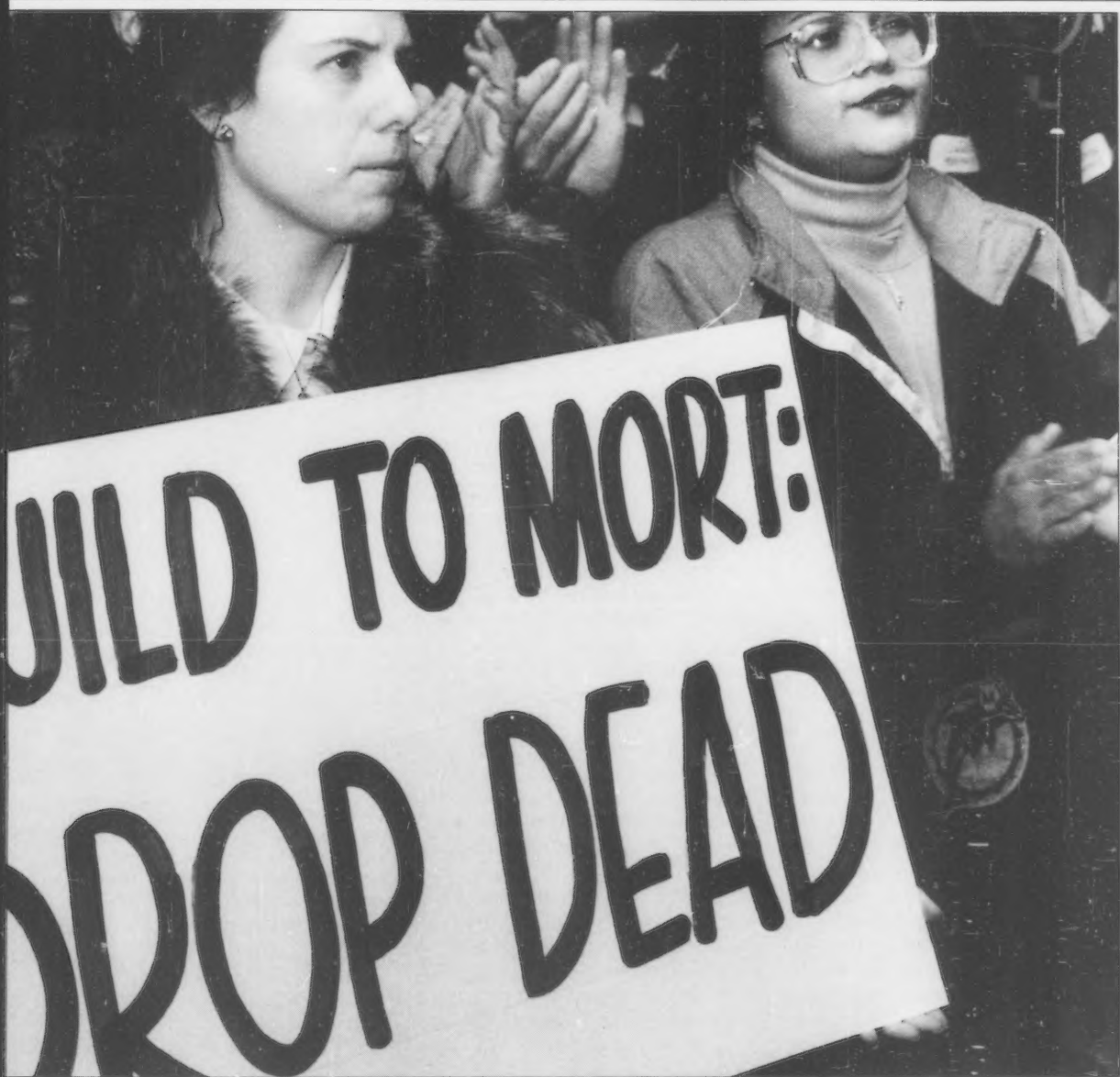
"I think the guild is in danger of dying," says Gail Lem, president of the Southern Ontario local and the other chair of Concerned Guild Members. "The union is in a declining spiral."

The robust debate going on within the guild over its future is occurring at a time of increasing boldness among newspaper owners. Some tactics being used by publishers seem to be blatant attempts to break the union. Others reflect an intransigence designed to wear the guild down over lengthy negotiations. Both tactics seem to be at play in guild dealings with two of the large chains.

The guild has been trying since 1986 to negotiate its first contract with Gannett at *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, a unionized paper bought by Gannett in 1983. Union officials say negotiators simply won't budge on substantive issues. The situation was much the same at the Stockton, California, *Record*, another Gannett paper, where the guild was decertified in 1990 after more than



"The current leadership is not capable of leading the union in the future. It's not that they are evil or corrupt; they're just not very smart or capable," says one member.



fifty years of representation.

"Their policy is to bust The Newspaper Guild out of their papers," says the union's president, Charles Dale. Guild leaders say Gannett sends the same corporate team in to each contract negotiation; the team puts an offer on the table that includes, among other nettlesome issues, giving the company complete control over wages — and then says the offer is final. Negotiations often drag on for years.

The Hearst Corporation is also aggressively pushing the guild and its members. After a long, tough newspa-

per war, the Hearst-owned *San Antonio Light* had finally started to give Rupert Murdoch's *San Antonio Express-News* a run for its money. But the *Light*'s 180 guild-eligible employees ended up the losers: Hearst decided to buy the rival *Express-News* and, on January 27, it shut down the *Light*. Not surprisingly, the *Express-News* is nonunion.

Undoubtedly the nastiest battle the guild faced in the past year, however, was waged at the New York *Daily News*. Mort Zuckerman bought the paper in January from the estate of Robert Maxwell, the flamboyant British

press lord who bought the paper in March 1991 and, a few months later, when his empire seemed about to collapse, drowned off his yacht. The *Daily News* sought Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection soon after Maxwell's death.

Under the terms of the sale, Zuckerman did not have to honor existing union contracts, but did have to recognize the ten existing unions representing *Daily News* employees, the three largest being the guild and the delivery drivers' and pressmen's unions. These and six other unions also belonged to the Allied Printing Trades Council, a long-

standing labor alliance designed to promote solidarity among the *News's* unions.

Such an alliance came in handy before Maxwell bought the paper, when a five-month strike against the Tribune Company, longtime previous owners, succeeded in large part because of the unions' ability to stick together.

When Zuckerman entered the bidding for the *Daily News* last year, it was clear that reaching agreement with the majority of the paper's unions would be a big obstacle to anyone's success. All the potential buyers made no secret of the need for big job reductions to turn the paper around. The question was which unions would take the biggest hits.

Zuckerman quickly displayed the business acumen that made him a wealthy real estate developer. He settled with the two key craft unions — the pressmen and delivery drivers — reportedly offering them small salary increases and/or bonuses, and only modest job reductions. With the union alliance shaken, and pressure from the bankruptcy judge for more contracts, the other craft unions soon reached settlements, some taking big job cuts.

By the end of last year, the guild was the only union without a contract, and Zuckerman was playing from a position of strength. He rejected proposals the guild put before him, informed the union that he wanted to cut a third of its members, and notified editorial and other guild employees that they would have to reapply for their jobs. Guild members were furious, and many directed their anger at Barry Lipton, head of the New York local, for getting them into such a position.

It can be argued that splintering within the guild unit at the *Daily News* over the past few years made it inevitable that Zuckerman would pick it out as the weak link in the labor chain at the paper. During the well-publicized strike in 1990-91, more than 200 guild members crossed picket lines. Many are still unhappy with Lipton and the way the union is run. "They fight the wrong way," says one former guild member at the *News*. "They're still wagging their dicks at these guys, when what you've really got to do is outsmart them."

Tonice Sgrignoli, a copy editor and active guild member who lost her job in

Zuckerman's purge, says, "The guild's toes have to be held to the fire to serve us better. The leadership is mostly male, mostly white, and resistant to change."

The future of the entire union does not, of course, depend on any one shop — even one as important as that of the *News*. What it does rest on is the ability of the guild to bring in members by organizing new shops. And that's something the union has not done well lately.

"When you get to organizing, you get to the heart of the frustration with the guild leadership," says Bernard Lunzer, administrative officer of the guild's Twin Cities local and a co-founder of the Coalition for Constructive Change. "I don't think there's a clear idea within the guild of how to go about organizing. We haven't done a very good job."

William McLeman, director of field operations for the guild and the man most responsible for organizing, says the union's energy in recent years has often been spent trying to increase membership at papers that already have a guild contract, or dealing with crisis situations where the guild is threatened. "There are a lot of fires we've been putting out over the past few years," he says.

This has troubled some members. "You can't go out and organize when you're telling people that all you're doing is putting out fires," says Meachum of the Coalition for Constructive Change. "They don't want to be another fire."

It is startling to realize that most of the successful guild organizing efforts in recent years have been the result of hard work by union activists who are openly critical of current leadership.

Gail Lem has shepherded at least six such efforts in Canada over the past five years, but she is also one of the guild's most outspoken critics, especially since letting it be known last year that her 3,000-member local wants to leave the union and affiliate with a larger Canadian labor organization. "The guild is too small," says Lem. "The economies of scale are not there."

Nevertheless, the guild has enjoyed some success in Canada recently, including winning a thirty-one-day strike at *The Toronto Star* last summer. Its record in the United States is another story. There have been unsuccessful efforts to begin or extend guild repre-



When the guild struck the Camden, New Jersey, *Courier-Post* in 1946, strikers were joined on the picket lines by thousands of C.I.O. members in a dramatic show of strength.

"If they look at it," says a press-union historian, "journalists have more in common with pipefitters than with publishers."



AP/WIDE WORLD

sensation in Detroit, Pittsburgh, Atlantic City, New Jersey, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. And there have been several decertifications. One of the most painful was at the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, where last September employees voted thirty-one to twenty-three to disband the union after just two years of guild representation. Before that, the paper had had an in-house union for twenty-five years.

An anonymous group of former guild members wrote a column in the January issue of *The Nation* that charged, "The Guild had no strategy for winning a contract. From the start, it was old-style bargaining. Sit and talk. Sit and talk—and get nowhere. Sit and talk and get humiliated and go back for more.... Here's what we 'won' in a year at the table: the right to take eye breaks from the computer terminal *if* we agreed not to stop working. The right to three months' probation instead of six *if* we agreed to let the company extend it in certain cases. The right to take the day off on Martin Luther King's birthday *if*

we gave up another holiday.

"Here are some of our proposals that were flatly rejected: job sharing, a work week shorter by half an hour a day, unpaid paternal leave, computer health and safety training, and the right, enjoyed by more than 90 percent of the union workers in this country, to submit disputes in the workplace to an arbitrator."

Ironically, the largest new shop organized by the guild in the U.S. in the past five years was the *Los Angeles Daily News*, part of the same local that lost the *Santa Barbara* paper. The executive officer in the *Los Angeles* local is Jim Smith, who is also active in Concerned Guild Members. "We did it [organized the *Los Angeles Daily News*]," he says, "with the international kicking and screaming all the way."

Now, Smith has fixed his sights on a more ambitious target, the *Los Angeles Times*, the largest nonunion newspaper in the country, with 1,100 editorial employees. But Smith and the international arm of the union do not see eye to eye. "By any objective standard you

could say we have a live organizing campaign," says Smith, adding that at the end of last year he had an organizing committee of more than fifty people from among *Los Angeles Times* editorial employees.

But the international says that is far short of what is needed to assure the success of such a massive campaign. "If you can't get ten percent of the people in a shop to commit to an organizing campaign, you're going to lose," says John Edgington, the guild's secretary-treasurer, citing a common rule of thumb in union organizing. "There's no question we would love to organize the *L.A. Times*. I don't think the time is ripe, however."

Last fall the guild asked Smith to put together an organizing committee of 100 at the *Times*, and gave him two months to do it. When he got only half that number, the union withdrew its support for the effort, which continues to be funded entirely by the *Los Angeles* local.

Ron Soble, a writer at the *Times*, is among those who think the guild needs to be a bit more flexible in its expectations of the first organizing campaign at the paper. With the *Times* reeling from a new-found austerity since Otis Chandler left the publisher's office, employees are confronting massive job reductions, forced transfers, and talk of pay freezes for the first time in the paper's history.

"There's an active core [of union activists] at the *Times* in all sections," says Soble. "That never would have happened three or four years ago." Jim Smith gets downright gleeful when he talks about what a successful organizing campaign at the *Times* could mean to the guild. "It would put the guild back on the map," he says, noting that other large nonunion papers, such as the *Chicago Tribune* and *The Miami Herald*, might then become viable targets for the union.

Despite Smith's optimism, forming a union at the *Los Angeles Times* will be tough. Eric Malnic, a thirty-five-year *Times* veteran, says that the paper has always been able to beat back attempts to unionize editorial employees. And while there is considerable unhappiness over belt-tightening measures, Malnic says, "I've in no way sensed a groundswell of

support to join the union."

There's no question that the guild needs to pick its fights carefully and that tough judgment calls will have to be made. But there's also no question that in the absence of other visible or significant organizing initiatives, the decision to withdraw support from the *Times's* effort gives ammunition to guild critics who see the union as lacking in energy and decisiveness.

One issue which the guild feels it has been decisive about is the growing problem of repetitive strain injuries (RSI). But while it has supplied educational material, lobbied federal agencies and legislators, and written about the problem at length in the union newspaper, some guild members complain that little of that effort has translated into pressure on publishers or contract language.

At *The New York Times*, where the incidence of RSI has exploded since a new ATEX computer system was installed in many departments in 1991 (an estimated 100 *Times* writers and editors are affected), the guild has been "slower than the company" to respond, says Don Bacheller, a guild shop steward at the paper.

Bacheller says he gave recommendations in February of last year to the New York guild calling for mandatory rest breaks, increases in the number of work stations, and other measures aimed at reducing RSI at the *Times*. "They didn't meet with the company until September," says Bacheller of the guild leadership in New York. "They didn't even ask for a meeting until summer."

John Kifner and Leslie Wayne, two prominent *Times* writers who were unable to type for most of 1992 as a result of RSI, agree that the union has done little to address the problem. "The guild has been absolutely useless," says Wayne. "I haven't seen them as a presence on this issue at all."

In fairness, the guild does not exactly enjoy its strongest participation at the *Times*, which may hamper its ability to get things done. Bacheller points out that when he came to the *Times* sixteen years ago there was a shop steward on every desk, totaling roughly a dozen. Today, he notes, there are only three.

"The guild suffers particularly from a lack of member involvement" at the *Times*, says Bacheller, who adds that

On RSI, says a *New York Times* reporter, "The guild has been absolutely useless. I haven't seen them as a presence on this issue at all."

many *Times* writers worry that union activism may hinder their careers. But Bacheller also faults union officials for not cultivating activism. "Despite what the leadership tells you, they don't want more member involvement," he says, because it threatens their role in directing the union.

Union leaders vehemently deny this, but the perception persists. "The guild has become increasingly irrelevant to us. It's a bunch of old-timers and you can't break in," says Leslie Wayne.

The lack of participation in guild activities by rank-and-file members, along with growing internal dissent, may be the biggest challenge the guild faces over the next decade. The current generation of journalists entering the workforce has little experience with or affinity for the tradition of organized labor.

"The guild has a problem with a whole lot of reporters who've gone through college or journalism school, wear suits and ties, and don't see that they have anything in common with labor," says Walter Brasch, a journalism professor at Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania and author of *With Just Cause: Unionization of the American Journalist*. "But if they look at it, journalists have more in common with pipefitters than with publishers."

Perhaps they do, but it's a comparison many young journalists are unwilling to make in their quest for career fulfillment, a fact that irks guild officials. "The reality is that a hell of a lot of the people who have entered this industry in recent years have benefitted markedly by the efforts of The Newspaper Guild," says president Dale. "The guild was created because conditions in this industry sucked."

The guild improved these conditions and, says Walter Brasch, "brought an awareness that the reporter has a central role in the industry." Throughout the 1960s, '70s, and early '80s, the guild negotiated strong contracts for members at dozens of papers, helping journalists reach a comfortable middle-class standard of living. Even at papers without guild representation, salaries and benefits often improved to keep employees from organizing.

Despite the current tumult within the union, the average top minimum salary for a guild-covered reporter is \$36,074 a year and rising, according to the union. This compares with average pay for an experienced reporter at U.S. papers of \$30,816 and falling, according to a survey by the Newspaper Association of America.

"The guild does have a lot of problems, but it is worth fighting for," says guild dissident Bruce Meachum. "Of all the unions I've been involved with, or know of, I think the guild is the best."

Ironically, past success may be hurting the guild today. "We made a lot of our members very happy — and complacent," says the guild's John Edgington. Meanwhile, says González, "Guild leadership, like most union leadership, is stuck in the 1950s in their ways of approaching management." Concerned Guild Members has issued a platform to shake up the union. It includes making new organizing the guild's top priority, encouraging more rank-and-file involvement, ending concession bargaining, and addressing the problem of repetitive strain injuries. But the list is short on specific strategies.

"I have no idea what the hell any of these people would do differently if they were in power," says Dale.

Still, there is evidence that a lot of people within the union would at least like to try. At last year's convention in Chicago, guild delegates approved funding for a strategic planning study to help clarify a vision for the union's future. The move was approved over the objections of the International Executive Board, which was concerned about its cost — estimates exceed \$100,000 — in a time of dwindling resources. All sides hope it will answer important questions about the guild's priorities and its chances of surviving. ♦



TINA'S NEW YORKER

by Eric Utne

In a speech to current and prospective *New Yorker* advertisers at the Rainbow Room late last year, Tina Brown proclaimed that "substance is back in style.... In the era we enter I sense that politics and process will be intensely interesting to people again. Seriousness will be sexy again."

She went on to describe some of the changes she has wrought at *The New Yorker*, which she said were to "preserve the identity of the magazine while recognizing that too many good pieces were going unread." Among the changes: she has reduced the frequency of the "daunting big read" (her phrase for 20,000-or-so word articles); added a number of shorter columns between "Talk of the Town" and the features well; increased the paper weight by 20 percent "to showcase the artwork and the advertising"; restored the original Caslon body typeface; introduced an expanded table of contents, running

Eric Utne is the founder and editor-in-chief of Utne Reader: The Best of the Alternative Press. The editors whose quotes accompany this article were interviewed by Utne.



Last fall, Tina Brown — the very British editor of the very trendy *Vanity Fair* — became editor of a very different kind of magazine, creating intense speculation over what she would do to it.

folio heads, and bylines at the top of articles; added loads of color illustrations and more color cartoons; dropped in the occasional black-and-white photo, including regular portraits by Richard Avedon; and begun running many more ads for the kinds of things that rarely, if ever, appeared in the pre-Newhouse *New Yorker*, like blue jean and underwear ads featuring half-nude models, and scratch-and-sniff perfume

inserts (since dropped).

She also introduced a host of new contributors, including executive editor Rick Hertzberg, who edited *The New Republic* for seven of the last twelve years. Hertzberg presides over and sometimes writes the newly positioned lead-off political think piece, "Comment." Other new blood includes Harvard's Afro-American Studies chairman Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; cartoonists Jules Feiffer (who'd never been in *The New Yorker*

before) and Art Spiegelman (creator of *Maus*); author Ken Auletta, whose first offering in his new column called "Annals of Communications" covered the David Letterman and Jay Leno flap; *Den of Thieves* author James Stewart; and Washington correspondent and former *New Republic* writer Sidney Blumenthal, who replaces Elizabeth Drew.

Although Brown told her audience that "the culture our readers are interested in now is international. Our horizon today ought to be global," she failed to mention that she wasn't renewing the contracts of longtime foreign correspondents Raymond Bonner and Stan



**Deborah Snow — Northern
Lights**

The old *New Yorker* felt so punishing, so male, so serious. Now it seems less so, but not a whole lot less. From here in Missoula it seems so New York.

Sesser, and has reportedly told colleagues that she wants to reduce the number of "situationers" (longish profiles of foreign countries).

Brown concluded her remarks by promising her advertisers that the new *New Yorker* would be "more relevant and more timely without being a slave to the week's headlines or the culture hype." This approach, she said, would "capture a new era and a new generation," which the advertisers no doubt heard to mean that Brown would deliver them thirtysomething readers instead of the fortysomething median age of the current readership.

When invited to write a review of the new *New Yorker*, I inquired, "Why me?" "You're the perfect person to do it," I was assured. "No," I pressed. "Why really?" The response: "Because no one else will touch it."

I must confess I'm not one of the faithful who read every issue of the old *New Yorker*. Though I'm a magazine junkie, and started *Utne Reader* to indulge my habit, *The New Yorker* has never been on my must-read list. The way I read the old *New Yorker* was to let the issues pile up (at my father's house) until someone told me there was something I just had to read — usually by Paul Brodeur, Bill McKibben, Pauline Kael, or John McPhee. I was content to wait for that happy confluence of truly stunning, important ideas and brilliant exposition, like Jonathan Schell's *Fate of the Earth*. I'd pass on the five-part series on grain or the articles about "somebody's childhood in Pakistan," as Dorothy Parker once quipped about William Shawn's *New Yorker* of the '60s.

So while I was surprised to be asked to write the review, I was too curious, or perhaps foolhardy, to decline. What is it about Queen Tina that commands such underwhelming public loquacity among the usually quick-to-shoot pun-

dits of American journalism? Is it the long shadow that the Newhouse media empire (Knopf, Random House, twenty-nine newspapers, fourteen magazines, cable TV, etc.) casts over the publishing landscape? Or is there something about Herself? To find out, I visited *The New Yorker's* offices at 20 West 43rd Street.

Arriving for a 5 P.M. appointment with executive editor Rick Hertzberg, I was told to wait in the reception area, which is a stark space much like any other New York reception area, except this one was devoid of reading material. There wasn't even a copy of *The New Yorker*. The receptionist offered me a cup of coffee, then directed me down the corridor to the lunchroom to retrieve it. Like the rest of *The New Yorker's* office space, the lunchroom-kitchen area has off-white walls and linoleum floors. It, too, was without reading matter, except for a wall rack that carried dozens of copies of the last three issues of a newsletter titled *Work and Family Life: Balancing Job and Personal Responsibilities*.

At 5:22 P.M. the clickity click of two-inch pumps caught my attention. Looking up, I recognized Herself, led by a little woman hurrying backwards, just ahead of Tina Brown, talking non-stop. Brown looked surprisingly tall (or was the talking woman exceedingly short?). Brown's camel-colored wrap was shapeless and limp. She gripped three bags: a big, black, Gucci-like handbag with an oversized gold chain-link shoulder strap, and two big shopping bags. The little woman, who turned out to be *The New Yorker's* first-ever director of public relations, Maurie

Perl, never stopped talking until the elevator door closed between them. Brown had not said a word.

Hertzberg arrived a few minutes later, returning from the funeral of the abstract impressionist painter Richard Pousette-Dart, who was his childhood neighbor in Westchester. Hertzberg's mood was somber but cordial. He smoked Salems. He wore a pin-striped, gray-flannel suit, blue shirt, and conservative tie. Throughout the nearly hour-and-a-half tour that followed, every person we visited or met in the halls, including writers David Remnick and Veronica Geng, considered his attire worthy of comment.

The New Yorker's offices, designed under the regime of Tina Brown's predecessor, Robert Gottlieb, are not laid out to encourage intra-office schmoozing. The hallways are so stark that I expected a pair of the endless closed doors to burst open at any moment, orderlies rushing by with a patient on a stretcher. The one space that invites conviviality is the open stairway between the 16th and 17th floors and the nearby library tables.

My tour mostly consisted of a visit to Perl's office, where, at 6:30 P.M. Hertzberg's watch began beeping to let him know it was time to catch the evening news. Hertzberg channel-jumped on Perl's TV for a few minutes, then settled on Peter Jennings's report. After watching for ten minutes or so he switched off the set. "Slow news day." He and Perl then took a call from a freelance copywriter, whom they congratulated profusely for "terrific" recent publicity releases.

The tour ended in Hertzberg's tiny office, which at that time was next door to Brown's, adjacent to the long library tables used for page make-up and fact-checking. Passing by the hallowed, legendary fact-checking area reminded me of something I had noticed on the first page of the first issue I saw after Brown



Susan S. Szenasy — Metropolis

The old *New Yorker* was leisurely, relaxed, by writers I didn't know. Now it's a must read — a pressured environment. If you want to be informed you have to read it. I used to read it cover to cover; now I turn to it just for the hot new people. It's sad.

took over — two glaring typos. Almost apologetically, I asked Hertzberg if he had seen them, since they were in the "Comment" column that he edits. "Typos," he replied. "What typos?"

I mentioned that the column with the offending errors had something to do with the press's post-election mistreatment of Clinton. Hertzberg produced the November 23rd issue. I just happened to have a yellow highlighter in my pocket, so I marked the little intruders for him.

Hertzberg summoned his assistant, Josh, and we were quickly flanked by a half dozen proofreaders, fact-checkers, and interns, waving earlier versions of galley proofs that had escaped the typos. "This is awful," Josh moaned. "It must have been a computer glitch."

Brown met me the next day in her corner office. Pulling her chair around to my side of the desk, she leaned forward and graciously made me feel that I could take as much of her time as I wanted, so I did.

We talked about editorial philosophy: "I edit for what interests me basically, and I think it is the only way to edit. I don't think about who is going to be angered. I feel that if it interests me it interests the readership." Reader surveys: "No, I have never done that." The *New Yorker* legend: "I feel the weight of the mystique.... I want to try things, experiment with things, have a license to fail. I could do that when I was at *The Tatler* and *Vanity Fair*. Here we are in a strange situation where the mystique is really enormous but the commercial reality was very dire. But I'm not complaining. You have to get on and do a lively magazine. It's about today and you know our readers are about today."

Midway through our interview she got up and asked one of her assistants to dig out a copy of a scathing critique of William Shawn's *New Yorker* written some twenty-three years ago by one-

time *New Yorker* contributor Seymour Krim. I later found it to include such lines as "The virility, adventurousness, (and) connection with the living tissue of your audience can only be restored by rebirth. This is not about to happen in the near future and could only occur after the present *New Yorker* trust fades away and twenty years hence stirs the fires of someone who buys the title and is then animated, directed, by the legend of a memorable past joined with a love of the living present."

She must have liked those lines.

I told her it didn't seem right that a magazine edited by Tina Brown would not carry photos by Annie Leibovitz and Helmut Newton. She replied by asking if I liked the Avedon photos, then went on to say, "I will use a photograph where it is appropriate by whoever seems appropriate.... I think that it's really working in the magazine. It doesn't feel like a violation of the magazine's traditions. I have had very positive feedback on that."

The negative feedback I heard most often, I told her, is that the magazine has become insistently, overwhelmingly topical. Even her friends, like *Village Voice* editor Jonathan Larsen, say she's gone too far. "The magazine needed to become more topical, but she's made it relentlessly so at the expense of the serendipitous, leisurely pace of her predecessors. You can find the topical anywhere, but not the timeless."

"I want to be both topical and time-

less," she said. "Timeless takes longer to create. Still, I don't think that it's become overwhelmingly topical.... My goal is to have one piece that really is of the moment and one piece that could be offbeat — a whole other rhythm. I wouldn't want to see the magazine ever won by one or the other strand.... You have to create a certain urgency in a magazine to compel people to buy it and read it. I think the decline in ads was brought about by people feeling that the magazine didn't really matter anymore. It was just, 'Oh well, I'll just get to it.'"

When I asked what would be her version of Saul Steinberg's famous *New Yorker* cover of Manhattan looking west, she said, "I think the whole idea of being a *New Yorker* is up for grabs.... The city is increasingly balkanized. What it's really about is race warfare and conflict. And that's one of the subjects the magazine will address very powerfully: What is it to be a *New Yorker*?.... This is an area that I think has been rather neglected in the magazine. Some of the foreign coverage has been great but some of the domestic coverage has been wanting — there hasn't been enough of it. I've tried to redress that. I've got Jane Kramer, who normally writes about Europe, writing an extraordinary piece about places in the Bronx. It's wonderful to see her eye turned to another area. And we have Susan Sheehan doing a fantastic two-part series about what it's like to live in welfare projects."

We talked about some of her favorite *New Yorker* profiles (Kenneth Tynan on Johnny Carson, George Trow on Ahmet Ertegun), and about readership. I asked if she sees her fortysomething readership getting younger. "Yes, I do," she said. "And I think, to put it bluntly, it could not get any older.... That's not to say that I want to lose the old readers, but...the magazine basically skipped a generation and we have to get that gener-



Bart Schneider — Hungry Mind Review

ation back.”

She talked about improved newsstand sales. “They were down to 6,000 copies sold on the New York newsstands. Now we’re selling in New York what the magazine was selling nationally and internationally earlier in the year.”

The New Yorker’s president and c.e.o., Steven Florio, later told me that the magazine’s newsstand sales, which averaged 20,000 per issue worldwide last year, have increased to 20,000 in New York City alone, and are up to 40,000 worldwide on average and as many as 60,000 on some issues. He attributes the increase to “all the press” the magazine has been getting and the fact that “we’re so much more topical now.” He said the fact that the magazine’s draw (number of copies put out on the newsstand) has gone from 65,000 copies per issue last year to as many as 120,000 does not mean the company has “flooded the marketplace with copies to artificially inflate the newsstand sale. That has not happened. Si Newhouse would never let us do that. First and foremost, this guy’s a businessman.”

According to a current staff writer, Brown’s “unflagging preoccupation with being hot, snappy, and of-the-moment” has led to a precipitous increase in typos and to the recent charges that some “Talk of the Town” pieces have been inaccurate because Brown puts off decisions until the last moment, which means the pieces cannot be adequately fact-checked. She has killed a number of stories as late as Thursday night (the magazine prints on Saturday). A recent profile of Al Sharpton was rushed into print on short notice to beat a similar, and some say richer, story in *The New York Times Magazine*. The beleaguered proofreaders and fact-checkers have been known to resist Brown’s capriciousness directly, but to no avail.

When I asked Brown if there had been

I look forward to it in a way I hadn’t before. It has the sense of someone’s vision, someone’s hand shaping it. It’s more fun now. I find it among my favorite bathtub reading. I don’t mind getting it wet. The old *New Yorker* was so gentlemanly and fair, it just said nice stuff about everything (except for Pauline Kael). The same voice was in every piece. Now there’s an edge.

any uprisings by current or former writers, I was unaware that she was in the midst of asking at least a dozen staff writers and editors from previous regimes to move out of their offices (which many have interpreted as dismissals, even though some may still have contracts in place). Among them were Michael Arlen, Burton Bernstein, Naomi Bliven and Bruce Bliven, Jr., Jane Boutwell, William Wertenbaker, Wallace White, and Cynthia Zarin. At least two, Henry S. F. Cooper and Ved Mehta, refused to go.

Brown claimed the transition was going smoothly. “They’ve been very supportive,” she said. “What about Garrison Keillor’s departure?” I asked. She said Keillor left because she hired James Wolcott, who had written a column about him in *Vanity Fair* that Keillor found very, very offensive. “I wrote saying that I’m sorry you went before we had a chance to meet. And he wrote back that he hopes to publish something one day. I don’t think there’s any particular acrimony. He’s a good writer.”

When I later asked Keillor if Brown’s account of his departure was accurate, he told me, “Tina Brown has a lot of nerve explaining why I left *The New Yorker* when she never bothered to ask

me in the first place. I left because I love *The New Yorker* and because she is the wrong person to edit it. I didn’t want to be on the premises to watch it suffer under her hand.”

Keillor says the magazine he wanted to write for “is gone now, bought by a billionaire ... who has ended the long tradition of editorial independence there.”

“*The New Yorker* is a glorious and dear American institution,” Keillor said, “but Ms. Brown, like so many Brits, seems most fascinated by the passing carnival and celebrity show in America. Fiction, serious reporting, the personal essay, criticism, all that made *The New Yorker* great, do not engage her interest apparently. She has redesigned it into a magazine that looks and reads an awful lot like a hundred other magazines. The best writing to appear in Ms. Brown’s *New Yorker*, in fact, was the section of tributes to William Shawn, which read like an obituary for *The New Yorker*.”

No one can accuse Brown of not paying her writers well. At *Vanity Fair* Brown paid her favorites upwards of \$100,000 to write four or five pieces a year. One media source says that Alexander Chancellor, the former editor of the London *Spectator* whom Brown imported to edit “Talk of the Town,” makes \$140,000 a year and was given an apartment and a “no receipts” expense account. Since Brown has brought on many more people than she’s let go, and still pays writers what Gottlieb did (about \$30,000 for a 20,000 word piece), insiders at the magazine speculate that her budget must have increased dramatically.

But Brown said, “No, it’s the same budget. It’s a very complex thing.... Shawn hired everyone with different arrangements.... It’s been very difficult to get inside of and understand how it works.... It *doesn’t* work. I’m just proceeding in my own cautious way.”

She cited similar factors when I



Jeffrey Klein — Mother Jones

I think it will be a *smarter*, more topical magazine, but one whose core morality is suspect. I expect [Tina Brown] to celebrate the Clinton era just as she celebrated the Reagan era.

asked if she'd considered running a masthead listing the magazine's approximately 140-person editorial staff. "That is one tradition I am very happy to be without," she replied. "This magazine is sort of a mare's-nest of strong hierarchies, yet it's non-hierarchical. Once you do a masthead you put one over another who never saw himself as over or under another. It's too complex, too weird. It would be a nightmare. It would only encourage the management to halve the staff, so I prefer not to do it."

Back in 1970, Krim complained that *The New Yorker* had lost its "subtle, enormous influence" on American culture as soon as it began to "scoop in sweet advertising money." Now Brown's mandate is to rescue the magazine from its current "dire commercial reality" by scooping in more advertising money. (*The New Yorker* reached its peak of 6,143 ad pages in 1966. In 1981 it sold 4,304 pages. By 1991 it had fallen to just 2,002 pages. For 1992, pages stayed flat, at 2,007.)

Under Brown, according to Jerry Brennan, a former research analyst in *The New Yorker's* marketing department who now sells ads for *New York* magazine, advertising has won the war with editorial. The evidence, he says, is at the front of the book, where many more fractional ads are now "braided into the editorial copy, and full-page ads get the preferred right-hand position opposite the new 'Comment.'" At the old *New Yorker*, the entire "Talk of the Town" section was kept free of ads.

Though the clustering of ads in the front may make the magazine appear to be fairly bursting with ads, perception is not reality. According to Steven Cohn, editor of the trade journal *min* (Media Industry Newsletter), which carries a running "box score" on weekly magazines' ad sales, advertising at *The New Yorker* was up only 2 percent for the three months under Brown in 1992. (Florio expects total ad pages to

increase 5 percent in 1993.) When asked if he knew of any special efforts *The New Yorker* is now making to increase ad sales, Cohn replied, "I guess they're selling Tina, just as they did when she was at *Vanity Fair*."

And Brown seems a willing participant, co-hosting with Florio regular "roundtables" for advertisers, including a recent special luncheon, attended by Elton John and Lauren Hutton, to celebrate the unveiling of a new ten-page Gianni Versace ad spread in the February 8 issue. The ads feature fashion photographs by none other than staff photographer Richard Avedon. Brown's willingness to mix editorial with advertising would have been considered unseemly by Mr. Shawn, who took great pains to keep the editorial side independent from the business side.

Indeed, Brown seems to have become *The New Yorker's* primary selling point. The magazine's new direct mail subscription promotion is a two-panel postcard that offers subscriptions for just \$16 per year. The card is similar to one the magazine used before Brown took over, only now Tina Brown's name is emblazoned all over it, with lines like, "First offer with Tina Brown as editor," and "For only 32¢ an issue, *The New Yorker* brings you the best cartoons, humor, fiction, reporting, and Tina Brown ... the best magazine editor in the country." Florio has been trumpeting the mailing to trade journals, saying that the two-million-piece campaign, which was mailed in the last week of December, got more responses after ten days than previous mailings did after

twenty-five days. (Industry experts point out that the Tina Brown-as-product-benefit mailing was sent out via first class postage, whereas previous mailings always went out via third class, which delays delivery and therefore response rates.)

Patti Hagan, a fact-checker at *The New Yorker* under Shawn for fifteen years and now the gardening columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, says, "I'm most turned off by Marky Mark having sex in Calvin Klein's ads at the front of the book, followed a few weeks later by a signed [Susan Orlean] 'Talk of the Town' interview with Marky Mark about his underwear ads. This would never happen at the old *New Yorker*."

Although William Shawn adamantly resisted public relations in all its forms, Brown is the reigning master-stoker of the star-hyping machine, and Maurie Perl, who flacked for Barbara Walters at ABC, is no slouch either.

But Brown may not be happy about all the ink she got recently for her very public tiff with authors John Le Carré and William Shawcross. She published a blistering review of Shawcross's new biography of media baron Rupert Murdoch, who had long ago hired and then fired Brown's husband, Harold Evans. She was then accused by Le Carré, who is a friend of Shawcross, of publishing "one of the ugliest pieces of partisan journalism that I have witnessed, [intended to] assure your readers that the unflattering portrait of Harold Evans provided in the book is mere Murdoch propaganda." Brown dismissed Le Carré's charge as "sexist." Le Carré responded that "the ethics of the great magazine of which you are now editor [are at stake]. God protect *The New Yorker* from the English."

Brown seems to be using the "Talk of the Town" section in particular to ruffle feathers and gain attention. In the January 11 issue she ran an unsigned



Sam Smith — *The Progressive Review*

piece defending East German dictator Erich Honecker, written by Irene Dische, the wife of Honecker's defense lawyer. The next week she ran an unsigned piece by new staff writer Jeffrey Toobin that was critical of his ex-boss, Iran-contra special counsel Lawrence Walsh. Toobin had been taken to court by Walsh in an attempt to block his book about the Iran-contra investigation.

"Now," says a New York media critic, "'Talk of the Town' reads like a media gossip column." Until Brown imported Chancellor, whose ruddy complexion and jovial personality inspired staffers to call him Admiral Stockdale, the section was edited by Chip McGrath, who maintained the magazine's traditional aversion to public relations hype in favor of the obscure, the odd, the eccentric, and the *uncontro-*versial. As Shawn liked to say, "We avoid topicality at all costs."

At the old *New Yorker*, "Talk" pieces were never assigned. Writers proposed stories, and if they were approved, they pursued them. Now, in search of the right "mix," Brown and Chancellor regularly assign "hot and snappy" pieces to their staff writers, many of which the writers simply but politely reject. So concerned were some staffers about the new direction of "Talk of the Town" that at a rare *New Yorker* meeting some senior staff members pressed their concerns to Chancellor. Chancellor was "very open and agreeable," says one staff writer who attended the meeting, "but since then 'Talk of the Town' has gone on as before, driven primarily by public relations considerations."

Faced with similar financial realities, most reasonable people would probably do just as Brown has done, if they had the talent. Though nearly everyone I talked to has some quibble about the new *New Yorker* (to some of the old guard, any change, no matter how minor, would be a sacrilege), most people admitted that

I'm a sucker for tabloid journalism, even when it's put in long rivulets of gray type. So I'm enjoying it. The new *New Yorker* seems designed for those of us who are presbyopic (losing our eyesight). The new *New Yorker* is where the older and younger generations meet — one because of a physical defect, the other from a psychic defect.

they're reading it more now. This, for a magazine that had become America's most-admired and least-read publication, is something of a turnaround.

So far, Brown seems to be accomplishing the goals she set for herself. She has made *The New Yorker* the most-talked-about magazine in America. She has given it a face lift without changing it beyond recognition. And, perhaps most important to her and her boss, she has raised newsstand and ad sales.

But she has attained these goals at a cost — the loss of the magazine's special role as the torchbearer for a uniquely American (and very unBritish) brand of civility and decency.

The New Yorker of old always seemed to me an exercise in defining and refining the ideas deemed permissible for admission to civilized discourse. It had the courage to disagree with the conventional wisdom even as it defined it, through genuine soul-searching rather than through politically correct polemic. In its coverage of the United States' involvement in Nicaragua, Grenada, and the Persian Gulf, the magazine asked tough questions that few other mainstream publications dared to ask, just as it had earlier about McCarthyism, civil rights, and the Vietnam War. By allowing such radicals as Michael Harrington, James Baldwin, and Barry Commoner to

fling their incendiary ideas from its pages, *The New Yorker* served notice to the American establishment that these untitled and unfamous authors deserved a hearing.

It's too early to tell whether Brown's *New Yorker* will be congenial to new and challenging ideas. If her editing of *Vanity Fair* is any indication, it may actually become hostile to them, not because Brown isn't interested in ideas, but because, as critic Geoffrey Stokes, sees it, she fears that "anything difficult or complex, and especially anything ambiguous," would be "boring" to her readers.

To her credit, Brown has published a number of powerful pieces that are certainly worthy of the old *New Yorker*, such as Richard Preston's article on rainforest viruses, Marshall Frady's profile of Malcolm X, and the memorial tribute to William Shawn.

Nonetheless, Brown has transformed *The New Yorker* and especially "Talk of the Town" into a kind of weekly epistle for America's new orthodoxy — the cult of personality. She rules as its high priestess. She's the one who decides whom to bless and whom to shun.

Will she allow *The New Yorker* to provide safe haven for America's heretofore silenced rebels and unseen minorities? (I'd like to see her use more writing by women, like Barbara Ehrenreich, Louise Erdrich, and Winona LaDuke.) Will she give voice to the blasphemies of its infidels? (How about working with some of *Spy* magazine's best writers, like Bruce Handy, Paul Rudnick, and Kurt Andersen? They are the true wits of our day.) Will she give a hearing to America's heretical visionaries and prophetic poets (Gary Snyder and Stephen Mitchell)?

Just how serious is Tina Brown when she says, "Seriousness will be sexy again"? Will it be sexy enough to survive in the new *New Yorker*? Or will seriousness prove too boring?

MR. SHAWN'S NEW YORKER

For nearly forty years
William Shawn was a
world traveler
— of sorts

by Lawrence Weschler



THE NEW YORKER

People used to ask me what he was like, and I'd say, "Imagine the most phobic man in the world. He lives in a city surrounded on all sides by water, and he is afraid of everything — of bridges, of tunnels, of trains, of buses, of limousines, of helicopters, of planes, of ferries.... He *cannot* bring himself to get off that island. But this man is also the most curious man in the world: he wants to know about everything and everyone and every place. And now imagine that by some fluke this man has come into what amounts to limitless wealth: he can take people and train them as his surrogates and then send them forth. 'Go there,' he tells them, 'Go —' to Japan, say, or Africa, to Alaska, to the Great Plains, to Three Mile Island, to Vietnam, to Montevideo or Monte Carlo or Montserrat or Mozambique, to Cape Canaveral or Capetown or Cape Horn, to New

For the past twelve years, Lawrence Weschler has covered political tragedies (Poland, Brazil, Uruguay, Czechoslovakia) and cultural comedies (Shapinsky's karma, Boggs's bills, Hockney's cameraworks, Irwin's scrims) for The New Yorker.

Guinea or New Zealand or New Jersey or Newfoundland.... 'Go,' he tells them, 'take however long you need but then write me back what it is like there, what the people are saying and feeling, how they spend their lives, what they worry about — write me all that, make it complete, and make it vivid, as vivid as if I'd been able to go there myself.' And they go, and they write him back, and each week he puts together a folio of their letters, of their reports — and sometimes those reports take the form of reports, and sometimes they take the form of stories or poems, and sometimes they come in disguised as film or music or book reviews — and he produces a little private magazine, just for himself. And everybody else gets to read over his shoulder — he doesn't mind but he hardly notices. That's what it's like to work for him," I'd say. "He really *is* The New Yorker."

And that *is* what it was like. But the strange thing is that for all his legendary agoraphobia, William Shawn was at the same time a profound agoraphiliac. For all his fear of public spaces, he continually displayed the utmost concern, and even reverence, for the Public Space, a forum he felt to be in deepest jeopardy (a jeopardy which, in turn, he often seemed to liken to the magazine's own).

I remember how, from my earliest days at the magazine — this was back in 1981 or so — he was already saying that the gravest threat to *The New Yorker* would not come from some other magazine but from television. "And this will be, not because people will spend their time watching television instead of reading the magazine," he would say, "but because television will inexorably destroy people's attention spans." People would lose the ability to concentrate over wide expanses — of text, of theme. And, of course, it seems to me that this anxious premonition of his has been borne out.

But there's something else as well, for the world itself has changed. It seems to me — to cite just one manifestation of that change — that another grave threat to the magazine may have come from the decline of the one-income family, by which of course I mean the practical feasibility of most families' being able to make ends meet

on just one income. Say what one will about the desperation (particularly for women) inherent in the 1950s-style household — desperations which were themselves superbly delineated in countless *New Yorker* short stories — but come Friday afternoon, back in the old days, the housework had been done, the shopping accomplished, and both the husband and the wife could look forward to a weekend during which they could easily imagine getting lost in a piece of long reporting or reflection. (And that, above all, was what the magazine at its best used to be for — this business of getting-lost-in, of finding oneself suddenly, unaccountably, immersed in some new place or person or perplex one had no idea one was even going to be considering as the week began.) Nowadays, such weekends rarely present themselves to most of the magazine's readers, particularly its younger readers.

If people were increasingly complaining that they couldn't keep up with *The New Yorker*, this said as much about them, and the pressures on their time, as it did about the magazine. And, in fact, it said something quite unsettling. People were increasingly coming home exhausted — too exhausted, often, for anything but television, a medium that answered their needs (perhaps "pandered to" is too strong a phrase) through ever tighter and snappier forms of address, forms which themselves were quickly imitated by almost all of the other media. And, indeed, what was being lost was the ability to read, or even more to the point, to think, to think at the sort of scale, across the kind of expanse, at the sort of pace that proper stewardship of the public realm requires: a pace of consideration that had been the very hallmark of William Shawn's *New Yorker*.

William Shawn is gone now, and, to an extent, so is his audience. But the need for the kind of attention he lavished upon the world is perhaps more pronounced than ever — surely the world's problems today are more and not less complex than before — and the challenge facing his heirs will be to find a (perhaps new) way of attending like that, and of enticing others to do so, as well. ♦



Vienna, Austria
14-25 June 1993

For further information write to:
World Conference on Human Rights
Room S-1040
United Nations
Department of Public Information
New York, N.Y. 10017 U.S.A.



UNITED NATIONS



HUMAN RIGHTS

DEAD RIGHT

Manuel de Dios's investigative reporting
on the drug trade in New York
was sometimes reckless, but it was often on target.
And he was always alone.

By Bill Berkeley

In the crowded corner of Queens known as Little Colombia, where Manuel de Dios Unanue lived and died, the American dream is intertwined with an American nightmare. Beneath the elevated tracks of the Number 7 subway line, the sidewalks along Roosevelt Avenue pulsate with the booming commerce of yet another wave of striving immigrants newly arrived from an impoverished homeland. But much of the capital behind the scores of flourishing restaurants, nightclubs, groceries, fashion boutiques, beauty salons, travel agencies, money-transmitters, and banks comes not from the Small Business Administration but from what is possibly the biggest business in Queens: cocaine.

It was in the shadowy Queens netherworld of the Colombian cocaine cartels, and among the myriad entrepreneurs who launder their billions, that Manuel de Dios made his name as a crusading reporter and then editor-in-chief of *El Diario/La Prensa*, New York's oldest and largest Spanish-language daily. When de Dios was shot to death by a hooded gunman as he sat at the bar of a Queens restaurant on March 11, 1992, there seemed little doubt that the Cuban-born journalist's fearless anti-drug reporting — "even if it costs me my life," he used to say — finally did him in. He appeared to have been silenced by the *sicarios*, hired killers whose prolific attacks on



journalists were all too familiar in Colombia itself but unprecedented in New York City. BRAVERY KILLED HIM, a *Daily News* headline declared.

Yet in the year since his death, and with the crime still unsolved, press interest has waned and the meaning of the journalist's murder has become blurred. After an initial flurry of flattering portraits, the forty-nine-year-old editor began to emerge as an erratic and reckless maverick who had made many enemies, perhaps deservedly so. He had left *El Diario* in 1989 amid acrimony with his colleagues, some of whom denounced him as a "lunatic" and an "asshole." His journalism was maligned as conspiratorial, poorly sourced, ethically suspect — the product of a fanatical obsession. At the time of his death, it emerged, de Dios was personally bankrupt, reduced to publishing a marginal low-budget crime magazine out of his home in Queens.

Lost amid the depressing details of a diminished career was a fact of no small importance to journalism: though he may often have been reckless and wrong, much of what he wrote was true — as mainstream journalists have been able to verify through court documents and law enforcement sources. De Dios was just about the only journalist in New York who covered the city's multibillion dollar drug trade with any degree of detail or intimacy. The fact that he sometimes erred scarcely accounts for why he was killed. It is doubtful that a law-abiding individual whom he unjustly accused of criminal wrongdoing would

Bill Berkeley is a New York-based writer. This article was funded in part by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

De Dios was just about the only journalist in New York who covered the city's drug trade with any degree of detail

have hired an assassin to redress the error. More likely, whoever ordered his murder did so because they felt they had good reason. The murder thus stands as an attack not just on a quirky loner of a journalist, but on all journalism.

A year after de Dios was killed, there is concern that the killer himself has probably left the country, and that in his absence the person or persons who ordered the murder may never be brought to justice. But the police team of three detectives investigating the case full time reportedly has narrowed its focus to a limited field of promising suspects. *New York Newsday* reported in February that investigators believe that as many as a dozen Queens-based drug profiteers and money launderers linked to the Cali cocaine cartel conspired to have de Dios killed, raising \$30,000 to hire the gunman and an accomplice. As of this writing, no arrests had been made.

The course of the police inquiry goes through territory that is fruitful for journalists as well. It has to do with the extent to which legitimate businesses in New York are fused with narcotics trafficking. All along, police have believed the sponsor of de Dios's murder may have been the owner of one of the many hundreds of flourishing businesses in Manhattan or Queens that are money-laundering fronts for the cocaine cartels.

This is a story as old as New York: the brackish tide of half-clean, half-dirty money that has buoyed not just Hispanic immigrant neighborhoods but many others through the decades, from the cash-intensive restaurants of Little Italy and Chinatown (credit cards not accepted) to Pakistani and Afghan fast-food joints. Money laundering is one of the most difficult stories for prosecutors to prove, and thus for journalists to tell. De Dios was one of the few reporters who regularly — and perhaps recklessly — tried.

Manuel de Dios was born in Camagüey, Cuba, in 1943. After moving with his family to Spain and then earning a master's degree in criminology in Puerto Rico, he came to New York in 1973. He worked with the Hispanic Criminal Justice Task Force before joining the staff of *El Diario* in 1977. He would spend twelve years at the paper as a reporter, columnist, and finally editor-in-chief from 1984 to 1989.

De Dios quickly developed a reputation as a crusader. He pursued the extremist anti-Castro Cuban organization Omega 7, which is believed to have been responsible for the bombing of *El Diario's* lobby in 1978. He assailed radical leftists like the FALN, a Puerto Rican independence group that launched terrorist attacks in New York and San Juan in the 1970s, and he likewise sought to expose the Puerto Rican police conspiracy behind the murder of two independence advocates in 1978. Among New York's 1.8 million Hispanic

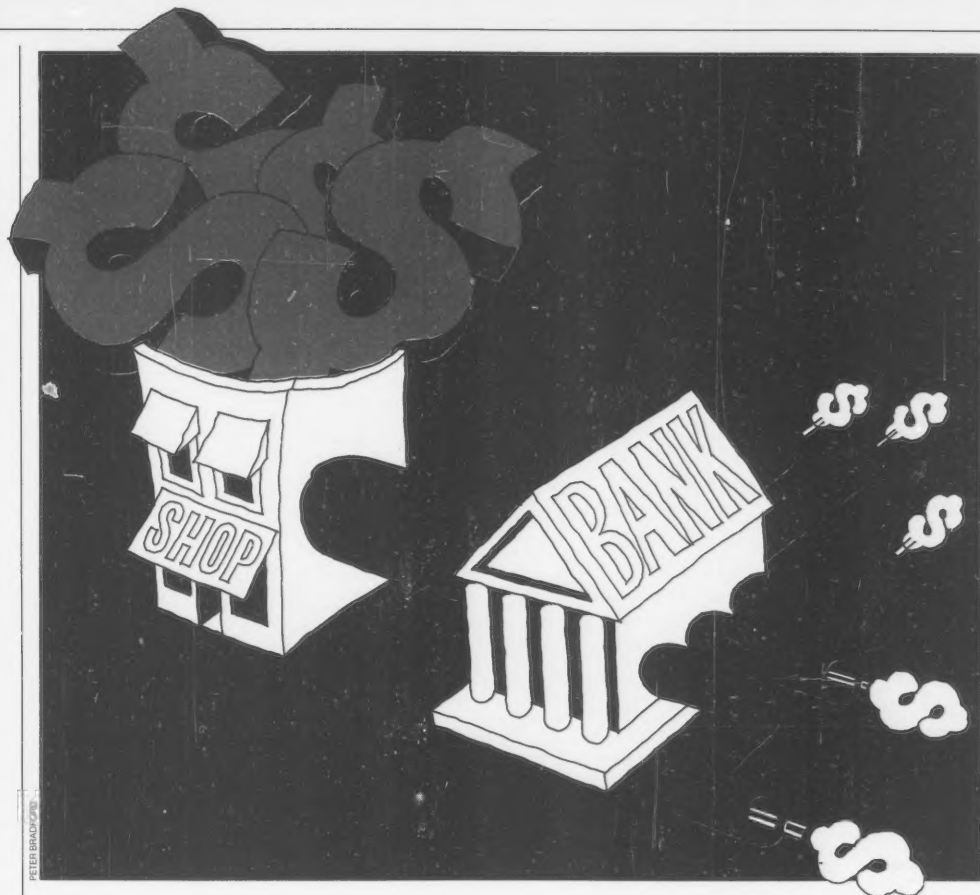
residents he won both respect and more than a few enemies by breaking with the tradition among many Spanish-language media outlets of soft-peddling corruption among Hispanic elected officials.

Above all, he hammered away at the drug lords and their legions of collaborators. While the English-language press rarely ventured beyond "drug-related" body counts in the escalating drug wars of the 1980s, *El Diario* sought to describe what was actually going on, naming names, publishing photographs of alleged kingpins and assassins and laundering fronts, diagramming the structures of the cartel cells that operate in Queens much as guerrilla insurgencies operate around the world. He pushed his team of young reporters — sometimes at considerable risk, some have since noted with an edge of bitterness — to tease out the details of turf battles between Cali and Medellín subsidiaries. Meanwhile, threats against de Dios's life mounted to the point where colleagues steered clear of his battered car for fear of a car bomb attack. "No one can tell me what I can't write," de Dios told apprehensive colleagues. "If they want to kill me they know where to find me."

De Dios was not a mainstream journalist by American standards. He was an advocate, and much of his work stepped over the boundary of acceptable — one might even say responsible — reporting. De Dios sometimes reported rumors as fact. His "investigations" could be longer on suspicions than on hard evidence of criminal wrongdoing. He had a reputation for relying on sources whose motives were suspect. He allowed himself to be financially indebted to individuals whom he had reason to write about, including suspected money launderers. He was also known to have cooperated to a problematical degree with law enforcement authorities. He clearly saw himself as a player, not just an observer.

"Manuel was a journalist in the Latin American tradition, where there is more of an emphasis on believing in a cause," says Rossana Rosado, a former colleague at *El Diario*. "He felt that North American journalists were obsessed with objectivity, and that as a result they ignore a lot of things."

Others among his former colleagues are less charitable. "He invented things," says Fernando Moreno, de Dios's successor as editor of *El Diario* and a longtime friend who later fell out with de Dios. "It got to a point where you couldn't tell what was true and what was invention." Indeed, his often shrill reports usually gave little indication of where the information came from, whether from criminal indictments or from internal law enforcement affidavits or from his many sources, reliable and otherwise, in the precinct houses and soccer bars where he hung out. As often as not, his reporting was based on all of these sources. His



In order to use their ill-gotten gains, and in order to avoid the red flags raised by the legal reporting requirement for banks of amounts more than \$10,000, cocaine profiteers need to disguise the source. One method involves setting up a legitimate cash business, with its own bank account, and depositing the dirty money as proceeds from the "front." Once thus laundered, the dollars can be withdrawn in larger denominations, wired out of the country, or smuggled out in the form of money orders.

most valuable contribution was not so much in unearthing secrets as in spotlighting publicly available information that other press outlets had overlooked.

Vicky Sánchez, the editor's Colombian-born companion and the mother of his three-year-old daughter, says she believes that whoever ordered his assassination did so because de Dios was "getting real close" to revealing the assassin's illegal activities. In a long conversation over coffee in a Cuban restaurant in Jackson Heights, Sánchez seemed isolated and embittered — as much toward the press as toward the police for their failure to solve the crime. "What is sad is the position of the media," she said. "They haven't acted like a journalist was killed. He was killed because he was a journalist, telling the truth. He was writing about things that people don't want to hear. Today it was Manuel. Tomorrow it could be anybody."

In fact, New York newspapers have offered more than \$40,000 toward a reward fund for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for de Dios's death. And in the weeks after the murder, efforts were made by a number of mainstream and Spanish-language outlets in New York to combine resources and investigate the case — and to pick up some of the strands of de Dios's

reporting. These efforts were modeled after the case of Don Bolles, an investigative reporter for *The Arizona Republic* who was killed by a car bomb in 1976 after writing a series of articles about political corruption and organized crime in Arizona. Bolles's murder appeared to challenge the old Mafia axiom that killing reporters "brings too much heat," and so a team of thirty-six journalists from around the country — sponsored by Investigative Reporters and Editors — assembled in Arizona to complete Bolles's investigations. The result was the Arizona Project, a series of twenty-three articles that appeared in newspapers around the country and gave Arizona's legal establishment the impetus to start cleaning up the state.

But the effort to duplicate this achievement in New York quickly foundered amid competitive pressures — and because of the animosities between de Dios and his former colleagues at *El Diario*, with whom Vicky Sánchez refused to share details of his ongoing investigations. Also, some of those who were involved frankly acknowledge that fear was a factor. "After a while, as it became clear that there was not going to be a quick solution, people lost interest," says Juan González, a columnist for the *Daily News* who spearheaded the effort at four news organizations

The businesses along Roosevelt Avenue in Queens are thriving to a degree that is difficult to explain without the flood of capital derived from cocaine



De Dios's *los secretos del Cartel de Medellín* was published in 1988.

— the *News*, *El Diario*, the local CBS affiliate, and a local affiliate of the Spanish-language network Univision. “Also, some of our own people got scared,” González adds. “We realized that we were out on a limb. Look at what these cartels have done in Colombia. You can’t underestimate what they might do if you got close enough to create a problem. Fear is not unjustified.”

Moreno, de Dios’s successor at *El Diario*, agrees. “Whoever gets involved in that world is risking his life,” he says. “Queens doesn’t belong in New York City. It’s like an isolated republic, a world by itself. It’s run by money launderers. Everything is impregnated by the smell of coke, and by the money from coke. It’s a very violent world.”

De Dios’s intimacy with the Queens underworld and his sometimes-questionable financial relationships with those about whom he had reason to write have led some of his former colleagues to doubt whether he was actually killed because of his journalism. “Some of his friends were dangerous people,” Moreno says. “He had a big mouth. He threatened people as a way of getting information from them. I think it was his attitude in pursuit of a story that got him killed, not something he wrote. In that world, a lot of people get killed because somebody doesn’t like the way you look.”

Nevertheless, the police team investigating his death is still focusing on his drug reporting. The two main avenues of the murder investigation can be delineated by two major avenues in New York where money laundering thrives: Roosevelt Avenue in Queens, where de Dios was killed, and Broadway in upper Manhattan. It is the Queens end of the investigation that appears to be bearing fruit.

In the Jackson Heights section of Queens known as Little Colombia, the investigation has focused on a group of prominent Queens businessmen known as the Nine Kings, a term de Dios coined. In the 1980s Jackson Heights and neighboring Elmhurst emerged as the wholesale headquarters for the Cali and Medellín cartels’ multi-billion-dollar business in New York and much of the rest of the country. There are safehouses for smugglers and contract killers, warehouses for the product itself — and scores if not hundreds of businesses that launder its proceeds.

Cocaine may be the largest industry in Queens, rivaled only by the airline industry at Kennedy and LaGuardia airports, whose proximity to Jackson Heights helped draw the cartels into the neighborhood. Although the majority of the neighborhood’s mostly immigrant residents are not involved in criminal activity, the businesses along teeming Roosevelt Avenue are thriving to a degree that is difficult to explain without the huge and continuous flood of capital derived from cocaine.

Prosecutors estimate that every dollar earned selling cocaine may be spent six times in Queens before it finds its way out of the country. On some blocks, prosecutors say, virtually every business is laundering dirty cash, willingly or otherwise — perhaps by doing business with the multitude of loan sharks who, in an old New York tradition, may be the only source of capital for not-yet-credit-worthy immigrant entrepreneurs. But if it was ever thus, it is not always easy to prove. “There is a quantum leap between what you think and what you can prove,” says Mark Feldman, chief of narcotics investigations for the Queens District Attorney’s office.

A number of the Nine Kings have in fact been prosecuted on various racketeering charges. Others have been identified in court documents and internal law-enforcement affidavits as suspected money launderers. An early suspect in the case was (and remains) Juan Manuel Ortiz Alvear, a Cali-born Queens newspaper publisher who is also a suspect in the 1990 killing of Queens printer Pedro Mendez, a friend of de Dios whose murder the journalist was investigating. Police have linked Ortiz to a team of *sicarios* responsible for scores of drug-related murders in Queens in recent years. Another target of the investigation is Jorge Alarcón, a well-known nightclub owner on Roosevelt Avenue who owns broadcast rights to South American soccer games. According to public court records, a confidential informant has told the FBI that Alarcón “heads a major Colombian cocaine distribution organization that services the East Coast of the U.S.” It is one of the stranger complicating factors in this story that Alarcón was de Dios’s landlord, and he has said that the journalist owed him \$16,000 in back rent before filing for bankruptcy. In 1988, Alarcón was shot in the face, in a still unsolved incident. Afterward, according to confidential government documents cited by *New York Newsday*, de Dios told DEA investigators that he had heard Alarcón was shot because he owed money to the Medellín cartel. For some reason, de Dios did not report this in *El Diario* at the time.

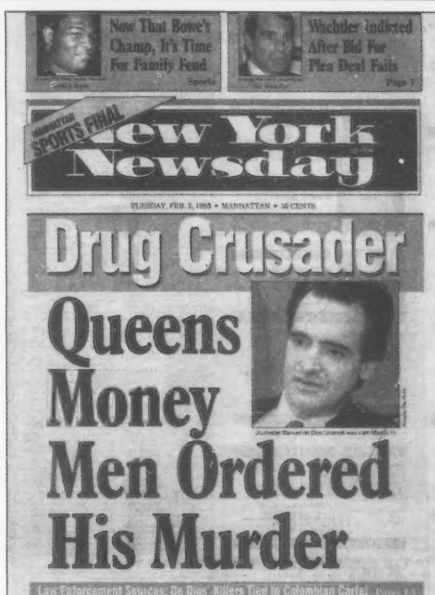
The Manhattan end of the investigation has focused on Washington Heights, where Dominicans have emerged as New York’s pre-eminent retail distributors of crack and powder cocaine, the “foot soldiers for the Colombians.” The long neck of upper Manhattan is well suited for the business in part because of its easy-in, easy-out accessibility, particularly near the George Washington Bridge. Washington Heights was the scene of rioting last summer after police shot and killed a suspected dealer. At the time of his own death, de Dios had been reporting on a group of Dominican businessmen known as the Federation of Dominican Merchants. De Dios had taken up

the cause of Joseph Occhipinti, a federal immigration agent who was convicted in June 1991 of civil rights violations in connection with Project Bodega, an investigation of Dominican bodega owners whom Occhipinti suspected of being fronts for drug dealers. Occhipinti, who had served eight months of a three-year prison term before President Bush commuted his sentence in January, claims he was framed by the Federation, which he and others accuse of being little more than an association of drug financiers.

In addition to de Dios, one other journalist emerged as an outspoken crusader for Occhipinti: the columnist Mike McAlary, formerly of the *New York Post*, now with the *Daily News*. McAlary wrote a memorable three-part series for the *Post* in October 1991 in which he branded the Federation as a front for the "San Francisco Cartel," a loosely affiliated network of gangs recruited mostly from the Dominican city of San Francisco de Macoris. McAlary's series was unevenly reported and fatally marred by his failure to examine the court record of Occhipinti's trial. The officer was convicted by a jury of his peers, and the verdict was upheld on appeal. A Justice department review of the case found no reason to question the outcome. Meanwhile, de Dios's former paper, *El Diario*, crusaded against Occhipinti for his heavy-handed investigation of Dominicans and denounced McAlary in an editorial headed MIKE MCALARY'S GESTAPO JOURNALISM.

Nevertheless, much of what McAlary reported on the Federation, if not on Occhipinti, was valid. The Federation, since disbanded, did include a number of convicted money launderers among its officers, including its vice-president, Erasmo Taveras, who pleaded guilty in 1990 to money-laundering and loan-sharking charges that involved illegally transmitting about \$70 million dollars in suspected drug profits to the Dominican Republic. So while Occhipinti was guilty as charged, many of his accusers also may have been guilty of the crimes he accused them of. Yet McAlary's findings were not pursued aggressively by the rest of the press. Not surprisingly, McAlary later emerged as one of de Dios's most flattering eulogists.

This saga is a good illustration of the prob-



lems encountered by law enforcement officials and journalists alike in the murky world of the drug financiers — problems that run the gamut from due process guarantees to racial stereotyping. De Dios, Occhipinti, and McAlary were birds of a feather: gung-ho crusaders who were often right, but whose standards of fairness were open to question. Yet the fact that they were sometimes right should be viewed as a challenge for mainstream journalists: Can the same information be published within the boundaries of responsible reporting? Since de Dios's death, some reporters have made an effort in this direction. *New York Newsday*, in particular, has published a number of impressive articles about money laundering on Roosevelt Avenue, thoroughly anchored in court records and internal law enforcement affidavits. A month after de Dios was killed, a team of four *Newsday* reporters produced a lengthy piece, including a map, identifying a half-dozen major money-laundering fronts in Jackson Heights. It was the sort of piece de Dios used to produce, except that it was based almost entirely on a public record of criminal indictments — State Liquor Authority licenses, Small Business Administration loan documents, U.S. Customs Service records, and the like — as well as on internal FBI and Drug Enforcement Administration affidavits. It was *Newsday* that published the first detailed account of Jorge Alarcón's alleged Medellín connection, based in part on trial transcripts and sentencing memorandums publicly filed in federal court.

Perhaps the most substantial investigative reporting on money laundering nationally was published in *The Miami Herald* in March 1990, a year before de Dios died, in a six-part series that highlighted the huge impact of drug money in south Florida on everything from banks to political campaigns. The series, like the reporting in *New York Newsday*, was based in large part on an exhaustive search of public records.

These examples show that the stories can be told, and they should be. For all the press's infatuation with traditional Italian mobsters, it is the newer syndicates from Asia and Latin America that represent the growth end of organized crime

New York Newsday reported in February that police believe a group of drug profiteers paid \$30,000 to have de Dios killed because of "his journalistic efforts"

The Meson Asturias restaurant, where de Dios was shot twice in the back of the head by a hooded hit man

If other reporters were giving these stories the attention they deserved, de Dios might not have been killed



in New York — what Murray Kempton has called the criminal equivalent of multiculturalism. For every big-name Mafia “hit” that draws front-page attention, there are many high-stakes murders in more recent immigrant communities that are never reported in the English-language press, although the stories behind these crimes are highly revealing. Likewise, there are dozens of racketeering trials that never make the papers, with case files bulging with richly informative details about the evolving nature of New York’s criminal underworld.

With rare exceptions, drug coverage still tends to focus on the teenagers in basketball shoes and not the men in suits and ties, and to overlook invisible neighborhoods until they explode, as Washington Heights did last summer. In so doing the press paints a distorted picture of the drug trade, exaggerating the importance of its least powerful employees and underestimating the extent to which drug money saturates the legitimate economy. Law enforcement agencies, having largely failed to stem the flow of the product itself, are devoting greater and greater resources to money-laundering investigations. More sophisticated press coverage of such cases could serve to highlight the strengths — and weaknesses — of that effort. The field should not be left to loners like Manuel de Dios.

New York’s Spanish-language press devotes much more attention to neighborhoods like Jackson Heights and Washington Heights than does the English-language press, for obvious reasons, with everything from execution-style killings to criminal proceedings against alleged money launderers getting far greater play as breaking news stories.

Perhaps the most extensive coverage along these lines appears in the *Noticias del Mundo*, owned by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon’s Unification Church, which regularly publishes voluminous articles about the unending violence among Hispanic drug gangs. But these stories, like those de Dios used to run, tend to be highly speculative and unreliable.

The Spanish press in New York lacks the resources for serious investigative reporting. *El Diario*, with a circulation of 48,000, has only six reporters on its city staff; the paper can’t afford to assign four reporters to spend a month pouring through documents, as *New York Newsday* did with its Roosevelt Avenue story. The Spanish press also lacks the protection — or the perception of it — that mainstream English-language publications enjoy. It seems likely that a decision to assassinate a marginal Hispanic editor like Manuel de Dios involves a different calculation of risk than one might make when deciding whether to kill a reporter for *The New York Times*. Since 1980, at least twelve journalists have been killed in the United States. All but one of them, including de Dios, were minority or third world journalists — Cambodian, Vietnamese, Haitian — apparently silenced by partisans (or government agents) in their own discreet universes.

For all his quirks and flaws, de Dios was the only reporter in New York who was writing about the inner workings of the cartels and about the individual people involved. Clearly, somebody wanted to silence him. If other reporters had given these stories the attention they deserved, de Dios might not have been killed. Whoever wanted him silenced would have known there were plenty of others to replace him. ♦

DARTS AND LAURELS

◆ **LAUREL** to journalists like you who never hesitate to take advantage of a smart deal — like a year of **CJR** (6 issues) for only \$19.95.

☐ Yes, I'd like to enjoy **CJR** all year long.
Begin my subscription immediately.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Please bill me

Add \$4 for foreign subscription.
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first copy.



3



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

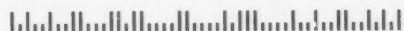
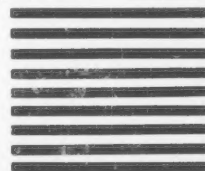
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 636 MARION, OHIO

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**COLUMBIA
JOURNALISM
REVIEW**

P.O. BOX 1943
MARION, OH 43306-2043



SLOVAKIA:

Here Comes the New Boss, Worse Than the Old Boss

By Rob Urban and Laura Zelenko

In Bratislava, in a small, third-floor office at Slovakia's Ministry of Culture, Jozef Sucha opens a fat folder and sorts through his collection of anti-Slovakia news clippings:

The New York Times, July 22, 1992. In an op-ed piece, Czech-Canadian author Josef Skvorecky refers to Slovakia's short-lived "independence" as a Nazi puppet state during World War II

and to the Communist past of current Premier Vladimír Mečiar. "These are not only lies," Sucha says, "these are serious attacks. They have no place in the article."

De Gelderlander, July 26, 1992. In an interview with the Dutch paper, prominent Slovak dissident Martin Simečka mentions racist comments made by Mečiar. Sucha, pipe in hand, leans closer to scrutinize the Slovak translation. "It says," Sucha reads, "'The boys of Mr. Mečiar are against the gypsies, against the Hungarians, against the Jewish people.' That is a lie."

International Herald Tribune, September 11, 1992. In an article headed FEAR AND YEARNING ON SLOVAK EXIT TRAIL, *Washington Post* writer Mary Battiata quotes Slovak Milos Ziak, a senior adviser to Václav Havel, presi-



Slovak officials are using Orwellian tactics against journalists like Zuzana Bubilková (on the monitor).

dent of Czechoslovakia until he resigned last July. "What is not right in this article is the personal opinion, which is presented as a true picture of Slovakia," says Sucha, pointing out several orange-highlighted paragraphs.

In Slovakia, the eastern third of what until January 1 of this year was Czechoslovakia, the assault on the press began as an integral part of the campaign to split the nation in two. Initially, the attack focused on both domestic and foreign news organizations, including *The New York Times*, which is perceived as opposing Slovak independence. Now that independence has arrived, the Slovak government is consolidating its grip on the domestic press.

It is here in the Orwellian Ministry of Culture that government officials

enforce a new "mass media policy," deciding who gets access to information and launching assaults on those journalists and publications they believe misrepresent the "truth."

Sucha, who worked as a journalist and propagandist during Czechoslovakia's Communist era, began trying to correct the coverage of post-Communist Slovakia back in 1991, when he helped

found a journalists' organization called Club for a True Picture of Slovakia. After Mečiar and his HZDS party came to power in the June 1992 Czechoslovakian parliamentary elections, Sucha was put in charge of public relations for the Slovak government's Ministry of Culture — a ministry that during Czechoslovakia's Communist era housed the state censor. Now, with the birth of an independent Slovak nation, some journalists say that only the ministry's methods have changed.

The transition from totalitarianism to democracy has been difficult for journalists all across the former East bloc. Despite the emergence of hundreds of new, independent newspapers since the revolutions of 1989 and 1990, remnants of the old system remain in virtually every former Communist country — state-run TV and radio stations, government-owned printing monopolies, even former Communist party papers that, in

Rob Urban and Laura Zelenko are freelance writers who live in Prague.

many cities, still dominate circulation.

In Slovakia, however, progress toward free expression has not been merely slow — it has been reversed. Just three years after emerging from the control of Communist censors, the press of independent Slovakia is in danger of becoming Eastern Europe's worst-case scenario outside of former Yugoslavia. And it's worth noting that, while other governments in former Communist countries have tried to manipulate the press, the current Slovak government has adopted methods remarkably similar to those used against the press in Yugoslavia before ethnic hatreds and strife tore that country apart.

The press's post-Communist problems began soon after Meciar and his party rode to victory on a Slovak nationalist platform and set in motion a frenzied drive to split the nation. While Czechs endorsed current prime minister Václav Klaus's commitment to rapid market reform and closer ties to the West, Slovaks endorsed Meciar's call for slower market reform and continued state control over much of the economy.

Different approaches to the media emerged as well. While Czech leaders have taken their own shots at the press — including a controversial move to replace the head of the state news agency with a government ally — much of the media in the Czech republic has attracted foreign investment and is already out of reach of government control.

In Slovakia, however, there is little foreign investment in the media, and the assault on journalists who have reported unfavorably on government leaders or on Slovakia's economy has been vigorous and quick. In the six months prior to the country's split, as the two governments wrangled over the division of federal property and future relations of the two states, the Slovak government:

- “deprivatized” the Slovak printing agency, which already had been sold, arguing that a state monopoly was better than a private one.

- canceled the pending privatization deal for *Smena*, a leading opposition newspaper in the Slovak capital of Bratislava. (By early January, the government had reorganized its board of directors and forced out two top

editors.)

- ousted the Slovak TV chief and the news director when they refused Meciar's demand to broadcast his weekly monologues; Meciar now delivers these speeches on a TV show called *Ten Minutes With the Premier*.

- rewrote the law governing electronic media to replace the entire TV administration with government appointees.

- barred certain news organizations from government press conferences.

- fired the head of the state news agency to install a supporter of Meciar's party and member of the True Picture club.

- adopted a constitution that guarantees freedom of expression and prohibits censorship except “...for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, state security, public order, pub-

lic health, and morality.”

Meciar himself, in recent months, has:

- threatened to slap fines on certain reporters or set up a dual tax system for newspapers, charging higher rates to those that are not “serious.”

- publicly identified “bad journalists” who print or broadcast “lies” about the government.

- personally filed lawsuits, which are still pending, against newspapers and reporters across former Czechoslovakia — targeting in particular newspapers that published stories about his alleged past employment as an informer for the Communist secret police.

- endorsed a press law that would require pre-publication authorization of interviews by government officials and set criminal penalties for journalists who misquote. “When faced with these types of reporters, a person has to be

TAB PLAGUES PRAGUE!

by Erin Kelly

The headline for the report on the college student's suicide was DEATH BROADCAST LIVE.

Undereath, color photographs documented the entire incident. The first showed the young woman standing pensively on the railing of Prague's highest bridge. The next showed her falling, her yellow bellbottoms ballooning, her mouth open in a scream. And the last photograph showed her lying dead on the concrete below.

The item was characteristic of the racy Prague tabloid that's become Eastern Europe's newest publishing phenomenon. “Other papers speak to the brain; we want to speak to the emotions,” says Petr Schonfeld, editor of the eleven-month-old *Blesk*, which means

Erin Kelly is a free-lance writer who lives in Prague.

“lightning flash.”

After extensive market research conducted by its owner, Swiss media giant Ringier AG, and a \$500,000 promotional blitz, *Blesk* hit Czech newsstands last April; by the end of the year it had become the Czech Republic's number-one daily, selling 500,000 copies.

“We expected that *Blesk* would be a newspaper for quite average people,” says editor Schonfeld, who gave up a twenty-year career at an agricultural newspaper to launch the tabloid. “It would be for people with medium education. People who are not too clever.”

Research shows that the average *Blesk* reader is a woman aged twenty-six to forty who has a high school education, lives outside the big cities, and works at a state-owned enterprise. In other words, *Blesk*'s average readers are not the high-powered individuals who are reaping the rewards of their society's transition to capitalism.

“In this situation, with our economic reforms and so on, we must bring to the people something like advice on how to survive this era which is very hard for them,” Schonfeld says. “We want them to survive this era with good humor, not with a black, negative view of life.”

Blesk offers sexual advice columns and topless photos, alongside articles with

protected," Meciar told *Pravda*, the former Communist daily, whose circulation of 250,000 is the highest of any paper in Slovakia.

The government in Slovakia now controls television and the national news agency, runs a radio station with a talk show jokingly referred to by some as Radio Meciar, and owns the state printing agency, which publishes about three-quarters of Slovakia's newspapers. In addition, the national news agency is financially supporting a newspaper favoring Meciar's party. And according to numerous reports, the party has diverted government funds to start a new newspaper in eastern Slovakia to compete with an opposition daily. Meanwhile, the Prague-based federal media, once an independent voice in Slovakia, died with the federation.

Just three years after the fall of Communism, progress toward free expression has been reversed

Those Slovak journalists willing to criticize the government now work almost exclusively for Czech or other foreign media. And the Slovak government's most bitter wrath is reserved for them. The journalist most hated by Meciar's government is surely Zuzana Bubilkova, a Slovak TV reporter who

rose to national prominence as a nightly news anchor on the now-defunct federal TV.

Bubilkova, known for her aggressive interviewing style, also co-hosted a popular weekly talk show called *Co Týden Dál* (What the Week Brought). On that show, Czech, Slovak, and federal leaders, seated on wicker chairs and sipping coffee, discussed the issues of the day. The show drew seven to eight million viewers in the Czech and Slovak republics every Sunday, until it went off the air as federal TV — and the federation itself — vanished at midnight December 31.

As the debate over the federation's split began to dominate the news last year, Bubilkova came down publicly in support of the federation. And — perhaps her biggest sin — she went to work for federal TV, long considered anti-Slovak by Meciar's government. On *Co Týden Dál*, she was considered the Slovak co-host, seated next to a Czech. Yet many Slovaks said they felt she encouraged negative statements about Slovakia. Though invited to appear every week, Meciar's party boycotted Bubilkova's show after one early appearance. In speeches, Meciar and other Slovak officials frequently castigated Bubilkova, calling her a "traitor to Slovakia."

Bubilkova-bashing soon turned nationalistic. Born in Moravia (in the Czech Republic), Bubilkova was raised in Bratislava (the Slovak capital) and has lived there most of her life. But the fact that she was born in the Czech part of the old federation was used against her. One sensationalist article in the Bratislava daily *Slovenský národ* was headlined BUBILKOVA IS CZECH: THE TRUTH HAS EMERGED. Beside the story was a hazy photograph of Bubilkova as a shyly smiling child.

As the Czechoslovak federation split, Bubilkova, who has always said she considers Slovakia home, found a way to live and work in Slovakia as the new correspondent for Czech TV, covering the very government officials who have so often attacked her, personally and professionally. It remains unclear whether she'll be able to carry this off.

headlines like METHOD FROM MONACO FOR NEW HAIR GROWTH, GRANDFATHER NEVER TAUGHT ME TO YODEL, and a profile of LADY LIUBA, seventy-nine, who can still do a back flip.

But *Blesk's* coverage can also be seen as a chronicle of the underbelly of post-Communist society. Its headlines reveal the anxieties of a society in transition — a society into which foreigners are flooding, in which marriages are crumbling and politicians are having to get accustomed to public

scrutiny. For example:

□ Unscrupulous foreigners: LECHEROUS HELMUT ISN'T GOING HOME, read the headline of a recent story about a German, Helmut P., fifty, who was arrested for a sexual offense involving a Czech girl.

□ Newly rich husbands: CHANCE FOR LOVE is the title of *Blesk's* weekly feature on a woman who can't find a boyfriend. A recent issue profiled Monika, forty, whose husband got rich in his new private business and then left her for a twenty-one-year-old.

□ Philandering politicians: "Every day at seven forty-five in the morning, a red government BMW arrives in front of one Prague apartment building. It waits for Miroslav Macek, forty-eight, [the married] vice-premier of the federal government. He's maintaining a relationship with television reporter Petra Pysova, the gossip says."

Where does *Blesk* get its gossip? One source is taxi companies, paid to tip Schonfeld off whenever interesting happenings come over the dispatcher. A recent rumor had it that *Blesk* had acquired the files of the former secret police.

"Unfortunately it's not true," says Schonfeld, who adds that he would happily pay for such information but hasn't had the opportunity.

ABC News *Nightline* opened last June 9 with words to make the heart stop. "It is becoming increasingly clear," said a grave Ted Koppel, "that George Bush, operating largely behind the scenes throughout the 1980s, initiated and supported much of the financing, intelligence, and military help that built Saddam's Iraq into the aggressive power that the United States ultimately had to destroy."

Is this accurate? Just about every reporter following the story thinks so. Most say that the so-called Iraqgate scandal is far more significant than either Watergate or Iran-contra, both in its scope and its consequences. And all believe that, with investigations continuing, it is bound to get bigger.

Why, then, have some of our top papers provided so little coverage? Certainly, if you watched *Nightline* or read the London *Financial Times* or the *Los Angeles Times*, you saw this monster grow. But if you studied the news columns of *The Washington Post* or, especially, *The New York Times*, you practically missed the whole thing. Those two papers were very slow to come to the story and, when they finally did get to it, their pieces all too frequently were boring, complicated, and short of the analysis readers required to fathom just what was going on. More to the point, they often ignored revelations by competitors.

The result: readers who neither grasp nor care about the facts behind facile imagery like The Butcher of Baghdad and Operation Desert Storm. In particular, readers who do not follow the story of the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, which apparently served as a paymaster for Saddam's arms buildup, and thus became a player in the largest bank-fraud case in U.S. history.

Complex, challenging, mind-boggling stories (from Iran-contra to the S&L crisis to BCCI) increasingly define our times; yet we don't appear to be getting any better at telling them. In the interest of learning from our mistakes, this reporter examined several hundred articles and television transcripts on Iraqgate and spoke to dozens of reporters, experts, and generally well-informed news consumers.

Before evaluating the coverage, let's summarize the Iraqgate story itself:

Russ W. Baker, a member of the adjunct faculty at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, is a free-lance writer who regularly contributes to The Village Voice. Research assistance was provided by Julie Asher in Washington and Daniel Eisenberg in New York.

IRAQGATE:

The Big One That (Almost) Got Away

Who Chased it — and Who Didn't by Russ W. Baker

ARMING SADDAM

The United States and its European allies have laws and policies designed to prevent arms and military technology from getting into the hands of developing countries, especially where there is a likelihood of their reckless deployment. If these controls were aimed at anyone, certainly they were aimed at the highly repressive, swaggering Iraqi regime, with its history of threatening both its neighbors and its citizens.

Still, when Saddam went to war against Iran, becoming the world's chief practitioner of chemical warfare, U.S. realpolitikers dubbed him the lesser of two evils, and the one less likely to disrupt the oil flow. The essence of Iraqgate is that secret efforts to support him became the order of the day, both during his long war with Iran and afterward.

Much of what Saddam received from the West was not arms per se, but so-called dual-use technology — ultra sophisticated computers, armored ambulances, helicopters, chemicals, and the like, with potential civilian uses as well as military applications. We've learned by now that a vast network of companies, based in the U.S. and abroad, eagerly fed the Iraqi war machine right up until August 1990, when Saddam invaded Kuwait.

And we've learned that the obscure Atlanta branch of Italy's largest bank, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, relying partially on U.S. taxpayer-guaranteed loans, funneled \$5 billion to Iraq from 1985 to 1989. Some government-backed loans were supposed to be for agricultural purposes, but were used to facilitate the purchase of stronger stuff than wheat. Federal Reserve and Agriculture department memos warned of suspected abuses by Iraq, which apparently took advantage of the loans to free up funds for munitions. U.S. taxpayers have been left holding the bag for what looks like \$2 billion in defaulted loans to Iraq.

All of this was not yet clear in August 1989, when FBI agents raided U.S. branches of BNL, hitting the jackpot in Atlanta. The branch manager in that city, Christopher Drogoul, was charged with making unauthorized, clandestine, and illegal loans to Iraq — some of which, according to the indictment, were used to purchase arms and weapons technology. Yet three months after the raid, White House officials went right on backing Saddam, approving \$1 billion more in U.S. government loan guarantees for farm exports to Iraq, even though it was becoming clear that the country was beating plowshares into swords.

At the time, inquiring minds wondered whether Drogoul

could possibly have acted alone in such a mammoth operation, as the U.S. government alleged. Was there a formal, secret plan to arm Iraq? And did the U.S. government engage in a massive coverup when evidence of such a plan began to emerge?

In fact, we now know that in February 1990, then Attorney General Dick Thornburgh blocked U.S. investigators from traveling to Rome and Istanbul to pursue the case. And that the lead investigator lacked the basic financial know-how to handle such an investigation, and made an extraordinarily feeble effort to get to the bottom of things. More damningly, we now know that mid-level staffers at the Commerce department altered Iraqi export licenses to obscure the exported materials' military function — before sending the documents on to Congress, which was investigating the affair.

Eventually, it would turn out that elements of the U.S. government almost certainly knew that Drogoul was funneling U.S.-backed loans — intended for the purchase of agricultural products, machinery, trucks, and other U.S. goods — into dual-use technology and outright military technology. And that the British government was fully aware of the operations of Matrix Churchill, a British firm with an Ohio branch, which was not only at the center of the Iraqi procurement network but was also funded by BNL Atlanta. (Precision equipment supplied by Matrix Churchill was reportedly a target this January when the Western allies renewed their attack on Iraq).

It would later be alleged by bank executives that the Italian government, long a close U.S. ally as well as BNL's ultimate owner, had knowledge of BNL's loan diversions. It looked to some like an international coalition. As *New York Times* columnist William Safire argued last December 7, "Iraqgate is uniquely horrendous: a scandal about the systematic abuse of power by misguided leaders of three democratic nations to secretly finance the arms buildup of a dictator."

Safire had been on the case since 1989, turning out slashing op-ed pieces. But readers of the *Times's* news pages must have wondered where Safire's body-blows were coming from, since the news columns contained almost nothing about Iraqgate for the longest time.

THE COVERAGE

Not everyone was slow to spot trouble. The coverage might be said to have begun in 1987, when Alan Friedman, a correspondent in Italy for the London *Financial Times* who was writing a book — *Agnelli: Fiat, and the Network of Italian Power* — learned of a European-based arms-procurement network that had gathered equipment for Iraq. In the book, published in 1988, he explored a five-year-old joint Argentine-Egyptian-Iraqi effort to build a ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, code-named CONDOR 2. Friedman's claims that Iraq was developing a nuclear weapon were shrugged off by colleagues in the press.

In August 1989, while working in Milan, Friedman noticed a four-line press release from Banca Nazionale del Lavoro. "Irregularities," it seemed, had been uncovered at BNL's Atlanta branch. (Later, Friedman would learn that this was the bank's way of acknowledging something troubling that had just transpired, unnoticed by the press: the FBI raids on BNL's U.S. branches.) Shortly thereafter, a London tipster told Friedman to look at a seemingly unrelated story — the possible role of a British company, Matrix Churchill, in secretly arming Iraq. When Friedman phoned a source in Rome and mentioned both firms, he was told to get on a plane and come down for a little chat. It lasted all night.

Beginning in September 1989, a *Financial Times* team, reporting from Milan, Baghdad, and London, laid out the first charges that BNL, relying heavily on U.S. government-guaranteed loans, was funding Iraqi chemical and nuclear weapons work. Led by Friedman, who relocated to New York City in early 1990, the reporters went on to produce about 300 articles over three years, painting a compelling portrait of a massive — and seemingly coordinated — international effort to aid Iraq. For the next two and a half years, the *Financial Times* provided the only continuous newspaper reportage on the subject.

The London paper tied CONDOR 2 to BNL Atlanta — which had just been publicly identified as the source of \$3 billion in unauthorized loans to Iraq. And in one 1989 article it warned that the BNL story was more than just another dull tale of banking malfeasance: "The CONDOR story raises questions about the effectiveness of the commitment of Western governments



"It is becoming increasingly clear that George Bush... initiated and supported much of the financing, intelligence, and military help that built Saddam's Iraq..."

Ted Koppel on *Nightline*

to preventing military technology transfer." It pointed out that, while U.S. intelligence had long bragged about aggressively monitoring the transfer of military technology, Washington had fallen down on the job. The paper noted that if government sleuths had been serious about stopping the arms flow, they could have followed either the money trail or the technology trail. "In each case, they appear to have slipped up," it concluded.

The *Financial Times* extensively quoted top former officials at the International Monetary Fund, the Pentagon, and elsewhere, who expressed alarm over Export-Import Bank loan guarantees to Iraq. Some asserted that Washington had, as one of them put it, "allowed and abetted the development and stockpiling of a major chemical warfare capability" in Iraq. Among the companies shipping militarily useful technology under the eye of the government, according to the *Financial Times*, were Hewlett-Packard, Tektronix, and Matrix Churchill, through its Ohio branch.

The most striking thing about the paper's revelations is that they were published *before* Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. Douglas Frantz of the *Los Angeles Times*, who deserves a lot of credit for his own reporting on Iraqgate, nevertheless says the *Financial Times* was without question the early leader on the story. "Events subsequent have shown in most cases they were on the money," he says.

By early 1990 the *Financial Times* was no longer alone. Representative Henry Gonzalez, chairman of the House Banking Committee (who also had noticed the four-line BNL press release back in 1989), began a long, lonely crusade to expose the affair. Soon he would be entering related documents into the Congressional Record in late-night speeches before an empty chamber. Attorney General Thornburgh even wrote to him, demanding that he stop looking into BNL in the interests of "national security." He didn't. Meanwhile, many reporters, accepting the administration's line that it was shocked — shocked! — to discover the BNL subterfuge, treated Gonzalez as a crank.

On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and the debate began in the U.S. over an appropriate response. But only a handful of reporters bothered to ask where he had acquired the military muscle for the invasion. One who did, Thomas L. Flannery of the *Intelligencer Journal*, a 45,000-circulation paper in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, warned in November: "If U.S. and Iraqi troops engage in combat in the Persian Gulf, weapons technology developed in Lancaster and indirectly sold to Iraq will probably be used against U.S. forces.... And aiding in this...technology transfer was the Iraqi-owned, British-based precision tooling firm Matrix Churchill, whose U.S.

operations in Ohio were recently linked to a sophisticated Iraqi weapons procurement network." Flannery, who wrote an impressive string of stories identifying Pennsylvania companies that supplied Iraq, had been hired by the *Financial Times* as an occasional stringer the year before.

Meanwhile, *The Village Voice* published a major investigation by free-lancer Murray Waas in its December 18, 1990, issue. Under the headline GULFGATE: HOW THE U.S. SECRETLY ARMED IRAQ, Waas pulled together a massive amount of information, ranging from senior White House officials' accounts that George Bush was a behind-the-scenes advocate of a pro-Iraq tilt, to an accounting of U.S. trade with Iraq that had a potential military application. "That American troops could be killed or maimed because of a covert decision to arm Iraq," Waas wrote, "is the most serious consequence of a U.S. foreign policy formulated and executed in secret, without the advice and consent of the American public."

The gulf war began shortly after, on January 16, 1991, and the media went wild. But when it ended six weeks later, most Americans knew little more about the war's root causes than they did before.

There would, however, be more to the story. Within hours after hostilities ceased on February 27 — and nineteen months after the FBI had raided BNL — the government indicted Drogoul, painting him as a lone-wolf financier of the Iraqi war machine. He was charged with defrauding his Rome employers of billions of dollars.

Nightline, which had been looking at Iraqgate for some time, hooked up with the *Financial Times* in an unusual and productive arrangement. On May 2, 1991, the team reported the secret minutes of the President's National Advisory Council, at which, despite earlier reports of abuses, an undersecretary of state declared that terminating Iraqi loans would be "contrary to the president's intentions."

Nightline/Financial Times also cited intelligence reports that Iraq was using U.S. government farm credits to procure military technology. On July 3, 1991, the *Financial Times* reported that a Florida company run by an Iraqi national had produced cyanide — some of which went to Iraq for use in chemical weapons — and had shipped it via a CIA contractor.

In another unusual and productive partnership, Douglas Frantz of the *Los Angeles Times* teamed up with *The Village Voice*'s Murray Waas. The *Times* published the first of their three-part series on February 23, 1992. "Classified documents obtained by the *Times* show ... a long-secret pattern of personal efforts by Bush — both as President and as Vice-President — to support and placate the Iraqi dicta-

tor," the paper reported. It cited a top-secret National Security Decision directive signed by President Bush in 1989, ordering closer ties with Baghdad and paving the way for \$1 billion in new aid. Although the directive had been briefly described in other publications, the *Times* put it in context. Assistance from Washington was critical for Iraq, Frantz and Waas pointed out, since international bankers had cut off virtually all loans to Baghdad because Iraq was falling behind on repayments — precisely because it was busily pouring millions into arms purchases.

And it emphasized the striking fact — buried deep in a 1991 *Washington Post* piece — that Secretary of State James Baker, after meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in October 1989, intervened personally to support U.S. government loan guarantees to Iraq.

"Nobody responded to that [February 1992] series," says Frantz. "That week, Gonzalez went onto the house floor to deliver another speech, and nobody followed that either." The *Los Angeles Times* went on to publish 100 articles exploring the history of U.S.-Iraq relations before and after the war. The reportage was, admirably, light on anonymous sources and heavy on information from internal documents, shared with the paper by government employees troubled by what they had seen.

Still, the top national papers ignored most of the *Financial Times/Nightline* and *Los Angeles Times* revelations. In fact, when in March an obscure Italian newspaper reported Drogoul's claim that both the Italian and U.S. governments had known and approved of his lending operation, only the *Financial Times* picked up the story.

Things began to heat up last June when, in an abrupt turnaround, the feds suddenly agreed to drop 287 of 347 charges against Drogoul in return for a guilty plea and pledge of cooperation. Drogoul, who had asked for an opportunity to explain his actions fully, suddenly decided to go mute. A troubled Judge Marvin Shoob, presiding over Drogoul's case, wrote to the head of the House Judiciary Committee: "[Drogoul] decided not to provide a statement until sentencing, after debriefing over a two-month period by the government."

By July, five other congressional committees had joined Gonzalez's banking panel in launching probes into various aspects of the Iraqgate affair, and Democrats were demanding that an independent prosecutor be named to investigate it.

Since Drogoul had made a

deal, the fall sentencing hearings were expected to be brief. But they turned into a major show when, in October, Drogoul's lawyer suddenly began introducing new evidence that the head office of the Italian-government-owned bank had known all along what Drogoul was up to. He also produced testimony suggesting that figures with ties to U.S. intelligence may have been involved. The prosecution quickly asked to withdraw its plea bargain, and agreed to a trial (which had the net effect of postponing public airing of the affair until after the November election).

Earlier, *The Village Voice's* Robert Hennelly had assembled a massive timeline documenting a pro-Saddam U.S. tilt dating back a full decade. He concluded: "At worst, that support was a frightening exercise in capitalistic opportunism (we made money both supporting and attacking Hussein)...."

THE PACK JOINS IN

Drogoul's plea bargain and sentencing hearing provided a perfect new peg, and everyone finally jumped in. With the *Financial Times* far in the lead and the *Los Angeles Times* a strong second, the Big Three — *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal* — got into Iraqgate late, leaving beat reporters struggling to untangle the story's many complex international strands.

The *Journal* set the pace. Chiefly through reporter John Fialka, the paper made up for its late awakening by demystifying technicalities through striking headlines and crystal-clear prose. Despite a small general news hole, the *Journal* constantly found space for explanatory Iraqgate pieces.

The *Post's* early coverage had a protective tone. In July, reporter John Goshko wrote about Bush administration actions that "unwittingly bolstered" Iraq's military. And he asserted: "The record suggests that Bush...Baker and other senior foreign policy advisers were not paying much attention to Iraq...."

The *Post's* R. Jeffrey Smith, whose Iraqgate coverage included the Drogoul hearing, produced several exclusives from Washington sources. Yet the paper did not significantly advance the story. "It was a story with high political content, and a paucity of hard evidence to back up charges of conspiracy," Smith says.

"Some papers allowed themselves to be manipulated, acting almost as agents of the Democratic opposition. Some people made this a crusade."

The New York Times, meanwhile, shifted into high gear —

The Wall Street Journal
made up for its
late awakening by
demystifying technicalities
through striking headlines
and crystal-clear prose

and promptly crashed into a pile of charges and counter-charges. To cover BNL and the Drogoul sentencing, the *Times* brought in Elaine Sciolino, the national security correspondent, who had returned to daily reporting after writing a book about Iraq. She had other credentials that might have been helpful: she had served as *Newsweek's* Rome bureau chief before coming to the *Times*, and had covered intelligence matters for years.

She came in cold, and her sudden coverage was almost without context, since, aside from columnist William Safire, the newspaper had failed to follow up on the massive amount of evidence already gathered by others in the greater Iraqgate story. When much of the *Financial Times's* early scoop material resurfaced during the trial, the *Times* reported some of it — without noting who had originally unearthed it. Safire, on the other hand, cited the *Financial Times* often in his early crusade to rise above his paper's seeming indifference to the larger scandal. During Drogoul's hearings, the *Times* brought in Martin Tolchin, an old Washington hand. He had covered the Neil Bush S&L affair, and seemed adept at telling this story clearly, but he made only a cameo appearance.

THE FOOL ON THE HILL

The *Times* largely ignored Representative Gonzalez, meanwhile, as he made his allegations and entered supporting documents into the Congressional Record. Sciolino got around to a close look at the man making the charges on July 3. Her piece, headed ECCENTRIC STILL BUT OBSCURE NO MORE, cast Gonzalez as something of a buffoon, and included charges that his disclosure of sensitive information was a threat to national security — without explaining why it would be. The piece could almost be read as a justification for the *Times's* failure to follow Gonzalez's earlier charges.

The *Journal*, which regularly reported Gonzalez's steady flow of documents and pronouncements, was far more charitable in Fialka's July 31 profile of the congressman. Headed LONER GONZALEZ TOILS TO EXPOSE WHITE HOUSE ROLE IN AIDING IRAQ IN YEARS LEADING UP TO GULF WAR, it presented a tough, uncorruptible maverick.

WHAT THEY MISSED

Many incendiary allegations reported by the *Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Atlanta Constitution* (covering the Drogoul hearing in its home town) were simply ignored by *The New York Times*, and sometimes by *The Washington Post*, as well. A few of many examples, all from 1992:

Intelligence Connections?

On October 3, the *Journal* reported Drogoul's assertion

that the director general of Iraq's Ministry of Industry and Military Production had told him "We are all in this together. The intelligence service of the U.S. government works very closely with the intelligence service of the Iraqi government." Three weeks later, the *Journal* reported that Gonzalez "produced a phone-book-sized packet of documents" showing the involvement of U.S. exporting firms. The documents mentioned one, RD&D International of Vienna, Virginia — which designed parts for Iraq's howitzers and was financed through BNL — that was run by a man with reputed connections to U.S. intelligence. The *Times* and the *Post* missed the first story and failed to follow up on the second.

Quayle involvement?

On three separate occasions it was reported (first by Representative Gonzalez, then by *The Atlanta Constitution*, and finally by the *Journal*) that BNL bankers claimed that companies seeking Iraqi business had come to the Atlanta branch at the urging of Vice-President Dan Quayle. One such corporation was owned by a man with close personal and business ties to the Quayle family; he built a brass refinery that recycled spent Iraqi artillery shells. Neither the *Times* nor the *Post* reported this.

Scuds and Superguns?

September 16: the *Journal*, in a piece headed IRAQ FUNDED SCUDS WITH MONEY GAINED FRAUDULENTLY IN U.S., INVESTIGATOR SAYS, recounted prosecution testimony that Drogoul had toured an Iraqi military facility, was shown a drawing of a missile, and was told that it had been financed through BNL Atlanta. *The Atlanta Constitution* reported this, as did the *Los Angeles Times*, whose lead stated: "Loans from an Italian bank branch here paid for improving Iraqi Scud missiles like the one that killed 28 Americans in the Persian Gulf War, a top federal investigator testified Tuesday." The *Times* and *Post* didn't report the story.

How high does it go?

September 23: The *Constitution* reported that Judge Shoob, complaining in open court about the prosecution's failure to call BNL officials to testify, actually sought to call his own witness. The *Journal* quoted Shoob: "I've read all the secret documents, and I can't believe [Drogoul] was the sole actor or principal actor in the enterprise." The *Times* and *Post* were AWOL on this story.

A question of bribery?

Even when the *Times* raised startling facts, it often failed to follow up on itself. On October 17 the newspaper noted that the CIA had "uncovered a document suggesting the possible payoff of government officials in the United States and Italy in the elaborate bank-fraud case." Readers of the

Times never learned more about this development.

DON'T FOLLOW ME, I'M LOST

In other cases, the Big Two — but particularly *The New York Times* — simply muddled matters.

In October, it was revealed that the CIA had withheld from Congress — and possibly from prosecutors — crucial documents showing what the government knew about BNL. The Justice department blamed the CIA; the CIA blamed the Justice department; and Senator David Boren, chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, got angry at everyone.

Sciolino did her most energetic work covering this turf battle, often using unnamed sources, which made it difficult to discern whose agenda was being advanced. And although the *Times* finally started producing exclusives in its coverage of this matter, its daily revelations over the finger-pointing were hard to follow and did little to foster understanding of the bigger story. (In the end, evidence suggested that the CIA had withheld the documents at the request of Justice. If so, in retrospect, the story was the collusion, not the feud.)

Readers' comprehension suffered when this complex story was reported as a he said-she said exercise. Here's Sciolino on October 11, writing about the intergovernmental feud: "The unusual finger-pointing over the case came after reports that CIA officials had disclosed to Congress on Thursday that, at the urging of the Justice Department, they had deliberately withheld information about the bank fraud from federal prosecutors in Atlanta.... CIA and Justice Department officials denied those reports today.... But their denials came amid a new disclosure by lawmakers that the Justice Department also had withheld information that the CIA wanted to make public.... The CIA, the Justice Department, and the Bush Administration have all denied wrongdoing in the case.... In a sharply worded statement today, the CIA denied that its officials had told the Senate Committee that it had deliberately withheld information from Federal prosecutors in Atlanta at the urging of the Justice Department."

Wording like this, one television producer who has followed Iraqgate observed, "makes *The New York Times* responsible for gross public apathy."

Dean Baquet, who had earned a reputation as a formidable investigative reporter during his years with

the *Chicago Tribune*, worked to advance the story on several occasions, especially covering Matrix Churchill developments in a separate trial in London. But he was only sporadically assigned to the story.

On October 18, Sciolino and Baquet wrote an overview piece, a belated effort to advance the story, although they appeared hesitant to state what, for others, had been all but proven long ago. Notice the qualifiers: "Some Congressional Democrats say the recent revelations are only a tiny part of a two-pronged Government-wide cover-up: to protect and conceal its dealings with Mr. Hussein, and to accommodate the Italian government. Even more ominously, these critics, without any real proof, have begun to suggest that the administration knew about the loans all along."

Six congressional committees were hardly "some" Democrats; the revelations were hardly "recent"; the evidence of administration knowledge was, by now, fairly overwhelming. As even the national-security minded columnist Jim Hoagland, writing a week earlier in *The Washington Post*, put it, "That Bush is tolerating a coverup on Iraq conducted by others on his behalf can no longer be seriously doubted. That Bush has lied about his knowledge of shipments of U.S. arms to Iraq can no longer be seriously disputed."

On November 2, Representative Gonzalez announced that the Agriculture department, which had approved BNL loans, had learned back in 1990 from the CIA that BNL Rome was involved in the alleged Atlanta fraud. This revelation not only challenged the government's assertion that Drogoul had acted alone, but also implied that a coverup was under way.

Gonzalez's disclosure represented another news peg. The *Journal* covered the disclosure in a piece headed FARM AGENCY KNEW SCOPE OF BNL FRAUD. Working from the same material that same day, the *Times*, in a story headed 1990 LETTER ADDS NEW QUESTIONS ON CIA ROLE IN IRAQ BANK CASE, chose to emphasize the CIA-Justice turf battle, obscuring the main point: that the Agriculture department was in the BNL loop. (And while the *Journal* cited Gonzalez in the second paragraph, the *Times* waited until the very last sentence to credit the congressman.)

Times deputy national editor Philip Taubman, who was deputy bureau chief in Washington until late last year and supervised much of the reporting on Iraqgate (except when it was assigned to the paper's business or foreign desk), sees the *Times*'s heavy coverage of

Wording like this,
a television producer
who follows Iraqgate
observed, "makes
The New York Times
responsible for
gross public apathy"

the CIA-Justice fight as a plus. "I don't think it's inside baseball when two major branches of government are involved in a donnybrook, both accusing each other of malfeasance," he says.

Many reporters from other newspapers criticize the *Times's* coverage of Iraqgate, and much of its coverage in general, for a bias toward authority, an unwillingness to challenge power. Taubman, however, sees his newspaper as properly cautious. "I think it's off base to suggest that our coverage was somehow deficient because we attempted to lay out what charges were confirmed and which might still fall short of being confirmed," he says. "We try in all our stories to make clear what we don't know, as well as what we know. And in a complicated story of this type I think it's good journalism to clue the reader in where inflammatory accusations are not yet, and may never be, confirmable or provable."

Sciolino, who recently moved on to become the paper's chief diplomatic correspondent, admits that coming in late to such a complicated story was tough. "I couldn't summarize the story in one sentence," she says. "That's what made it so difficult to explain — to an editor, to people at a cocktail party. It's even more complicated than Iran-contra."

In retrospect, she says, "I think our paper could have done a better job, especially in the beginning. One spinoff could be to look at the whole arms procurement network around the world, how independent arms dealers, banks, and governments who own weapons-production facilities promote arms proliferation." Yet, Sciolino adds, arms proliferation "is not a sexy story."

She praises the *Los Angeles Times* for putting two people on the story, and for treating it as an investigation rather than as a beat story. She says her paper was hobbled because the story affected several sections of the paper — foreign, national, and business — and was parceled out to them. So no one editor was in charge of coordinating coverage.

LESSONS

With Dragoul's new trial set for October, there is still time for news organizations to wise up. Some things everyone agrees on: besides exploring the proliferation of weapons into unstable or dangerous hands, a serious Iraqgate investigation would look at the power of America's largest corporations

Besides exploring the proliferation of weapons, a serious Iraqgate investigation would look at the power of America's largest corporations to sway foreign policy

to sway foreign policy in ways that help them make sales. The *Los Angeles Times*, the *Financial Times*, and others did explore this, but there was little follow-up. One exception was the *Journal*, which led an October 12 piece this way: "In the unfolding drama of how the U.S. financed and supplied Saddam Hussein's Iraq, there's more than a walk-on part for corporate America." The *Journal's* John Fialka cited a list of major U.S. corporations that "saw Iraq as a gusher of business — so long as credits were wrung out of government agencies such as the Agriculture department, Commodity Credit Corp., and the Export-Import Bank."

Serious coverage would also examine geopolitical arrangements between countries like the U.S. and Italy, the place of banks in global scandals, and the role of American and foreign intelligence agencies in secretly carrying out policies that the American people have not endorsed. And to do this it would also seem necessary to report this story with some distance from partisan sources, whether Robert Gates or Henry Gonzalez, and not just count on leaks alone.

As it was, for a long time reporters couldn't even count on partisan political warfare to generate scoops. In Congress, both parties had repeatedly backed legislation authorizing farm credits to Iraq — despite warnings from Kurdish representatives that the funds would end up being used against them, in the form of poison gas. With no one to hand the story to the media on a platter, unraveling it required following hunches, and spending time and money — serious investigative reporting that roams far afield from the constraints of the conventional beat.

For ABC, which broke plenty of stories in concert with London's *Financial Times*, only to watch them sink, covering Iraqgate has been a sobering experience. "It's been very frustrating for us," says Gordon Platt, a *Nightline* producer. "We'd put it on the air, but there would be no follow-up by the other press. We'd expect the *Times* or *Post* would pick up on it. But until this last summer, they didn't."

As for why much of the press fears this kind of story, perhaps Ted Koppel put it best. "There's a good reason why we in the media are so partial to a nice, torrid sex scandal," he said as he opened yet another *Nightline* Iraqgate report last July. "It is, among other things, so easy to explain and so easy to understand. Nothing at all, in other words, like allegations of a government coverup, which tend to be not at all easy to explain, and even more difficult to understand." ♦

TECHNOLOGY

THE DOWNSIDE OF WONDERLAND

BY ANDREW SCHNEIDER

The wonderful world of high tech has become firmly entrenched in most of our newsrooms, and life for some journalists is easier, or at least faster. But some editors are beginning to question whether all the new technology is helping or hurting the quality of our work.

Some of the new equipment and methods are clearly beneficial.

■ Reporters covering Hurricane Andrew link their laptop computers into cellular phones and file stories by flash-light while sitting on piles of rubble.

■ Copy clerks quickly run the daily mountain of news releases through optical character readers, and fodder for briefs pops up in the system without a keystroke.

■ Documents, statements, and research spew out of fax machines, and the same devices are used to speed FOI requests to government agencies within minutes after the requests are signed.

■ During the gulf war, Jennifer Belton, research director at *The Washington Post*, creates a database on a single, small computer disk that gives correspondents in the field lengthy descriptions and specifications of every ship, aircraft, vehicle, and weapon used by all allied and enemy forces.

In some newsrooms, the use of computers to gather news is doubling and tripling each year. Meanwhile, many editors are starting to worry that too

much emphasis is being placed on the technology and not enough on nurturing the more traditional, basic journalistic skills.

"All the computers and high-tech hardware in the world won't produce top-quality journalism without the right people doing the right things," says John Carroll, editor of the *Baltimore Sun*. "It's crazy to buy some computers and assume you're ready to start cranking out investigative projects."

William Casey, *The Washington Post's* new director of computer reporting, echoes Carroll's view. "Computers

are tools — useful, valuable tools," he says, "but unless their use is based on a firm foundation of good ideas from reporters and editors, don't get your expectations up."

Interviews with senior editors from twenty-five large and mid-sized news organizations generated mixed reviews for the computers' effect on productivity. Twenty percent of those questioned said the use of computers reduced the "get-it-in-the-paper" time of projects, and 20 percent said there was no measurable change from pre-computer days, but 60 percent said the magic boxes slowed production significantly. The reasons ranged from unfamiliarity with the computers or software to the fact that reporters were dealing with far larger pools of information or were spending more time digging in dry wells.

When asked whether computers improved the overall quality and readability of stories, 28 percent of the editors said they saw improvement, and 16 percent noted no change, but 56 percent said the impact, the relevance of the topic, and the overall quality had diminished.

"A well-structured computer database can generate enough statistics to kill the best-written story," says Mary Pat Flaherty, formerly special editor and

Sunday columnist for the late *Pittsburgh Press*, now metro projects editor for *The Washington Post*. "Reporters must fight to keep the human factor in their copy. Editors must keep all but the most relevant statistics in a box or out of the story. Numbers, even those never before reported, should be used only when examples of real people can't be gotten."

Inaccurate information is another concern. Most of us who have done many stories based on databases have learned that it's only too easy for bad



data to get into stories.

In the early days of computers, the watchword was always "GIGO — garbage in, garbage out." But many journalists have either forgotten it or never learned it in the first place. Rows and rows of figures flashing across the computer screen or streaming forth on printouts can be seductive to the reporter desperate for the crucial calculation on which to hang a story.

For example, Flaherty and I had been told for years that blacks had to wait longer than whites for kidney transplants but that this was almost statistically impossible to prove.

Finally, we were able to get our hands on a computerized tally listing the age, race, sex, location, and waiting time for 13,888 patients who had received kidneys nationwide during a two-year period.

We shoved the raw data into a database we had created, and the computer spat out the fact that blacks were waiting almost 200 percent longer for the organ than whites. It was a hell of a

Andrew Schneider, who has won two Pulitzers for his investigative work, is assistant managing editor/projects for Scripps Howard News Service in Washington.

STEVE HENRY

STUDENTS / YOUNG WRITERS

\$7,500 in honor of freedom

The 7th annual Felix Morley Memorial Journalism Competition is open to young writers (25 and under) and students whose published editorials, articles, reviews, or essays reflect an appreciation of the free society. First prize, \$2,500; total of \$7,500 in awards. Entry deadline: June 15, 1993.

For rules and entry form, contact: Felix Morley Competition, Institute for Humane Studies, George Mason University, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030-4444.



Investigative Reporters and
Editors announces

Conference Scholarships for Minority Journalists

IRE encourages minority professional and student journalists to compete for funding to attend IRE's 1993 National Conference, "Trade Secrets with the Best In the Business," in New York City, June 3-6.

IRE will pay travel and hotel expenses and waive registration fees for awardees. For an application form, call (314) 882-2042 right away.

Deadline: March 15

story and we started writing it. But, scanning the geographic breakdown, we were puzzled by the large numbers of blacks getting transplants in Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona, states that have low black populations.

Nearing deadline, we went back to the government source of the data and found that they had erroneously listed all Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans as blacks. The accurate figure was that blacks were waiting 59 per-



cent longer than whites for their new kidneys. Still an important story that got national play, but we had come awfully close to blowing our credibility.

"Verify. Verify. Verify," cautions David Ashenfelter, assistant city editor of the *Detroit Free Press*, who speaks from experience. He once did a computer study of absenteeism in the Michigan legislature and based the rankings on the number of more than 1,300 roll call votes that each of the 183 lawmakers had missed. Late on Saturday afternoon, as the pages were being pasted up for the Sunday piece, he discovered that he had failed to calculate the absenteeism to the second decimal place.

"The new calculations changed the ranking of more than a dozen of the legislators," he recalls. "We had to frantically make major changes in the story and redo a complex chart on deadline.

"Bad data and good data have one thing in common — they both look impressive on a computer screen," Ashenfelter adds.

Dwight Morris, editor for special investigations for the *Los Angeles Times*, has years of experience stroking data from the Federal Election Commission into his computers and generating important stories. But three weeks before last November's election, under deadline pressure, he accepted government data without double-checking it. The story was about the top twenty-five contributors of soft money to political parties; in the thousands of listings he examined, the FEC had accidentally reported \$1.5 million in contributions twice. As a result, Morris's published story attributed significantly larger contributions to two individuals than they had actually given.

"I violated my own long-standing rule of never letting anything get published without first comparing crucial computer output with the original hard copy of the information," Morris says. "The rule with computers has got to be, Verify every piece of data coming out. Don't rely on a computer to prevent mistakes."

There's even need for caution and double-checking when working with on-line services like DataTimes, Vu/Text, Nexis, and Dialog, which offer instant access to work done by other reporters in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, and television news programs.

"There is no doubt that these reference databases are a great asset for the reporter trying to quickly background a story or a project," says Deborah Howell, chief of Newhouse Newspapers' Washington bureau. "It hasn't happened here, but the potential for trouble is great. There are reporters who we all know will pick up a direct quote from one of these databases and dump it in a story without checking it out. If editors don't watch it, these computers could make careless reporters even more careless," she says.

The bottom line is that computer-assisted journalism is just that — computers assisting us in getting the story. They cannot and should not be allowed to replace the basic journalistic skills required to make a story interesting and accurate. ♦

BOOKS

A PRESS-BASHING EXTRAVAGANZA

BY HOWARD KURTZ

James Squires, the former *Chicago Tribune* editor who resurfaced last year as Ross Perot's campaign spokesman, has a flair for colorful overstatement. "The media treatment of Ross Perot was the journalistic equivalent of the police beating of Rodney King," he wrote last fall.

The crusty Tennessean was the talk of the news business during the political season, dissing his former profession as a collection of "amateur sleuths," "kids who don't know beans," and prosecutorial types who automatically assumed that whatever he said on Perot's behalf must be a lie. A "disgrace," he thundered.

So the prospect of a Squires book about newspapers was eagerly anticipated as a press-bashing extravaganza. Squires has obliged with a two-fisted assault on the corporatization of the newspaper business — an alarming trend that, it just so happens, is epitomized by the way he was unceremoniously fired as editor of the *Tribune*.

First, the good news: Squires is an engaging storyteller, and when recounting his battles against the corporate heathens of Tribune Tower, his obvious bile makes for good reading. Although the sound of a grinding ax is unmistakable, Squires depicts his former foes as small-minded men who perpetually pervert the practice of journalism. And his chief target is one John Madigan, who was promoted from chief financial officer to publisher and president of the *Tribune* — a job Squires obviously wanted.

Howard Kurtz, a Washington Post reporter, is the author of Media Circus: The Trouble with America's Newspapers, to be published this spring by Times Books.



SQUIRES: BATTLING CORPORATE HEATHENS

Madigan, he says, "was notorious for using *Tribune* reporters as travel guides." He once asked Squires for help in planning a vacation in China, and to escort him around the United Nations and Washington power centers. Madigan also accepted a free airplane ride back to Chicago from then transportation secretary Samuel Skinner (for which Squires insisted that his boss reimburse the government). There was more. According to Squires, Madigan bought a fur coat from one of the *Tribune's* leading advertisers, then asked that it be delivered to another executive's home in Wisconsin to avoid paying Illinois sales tax.

In the book's penultimate scene, Madigan dismisses Squires in 1989, despite a decade of record-breaking profits, complaining: "You have never shown me the proper reverence." Squires indignantly refuses Madigan's demand that he take a vow of silence in exchange for his million-dollar golden handshake — a pledge that would have prevented the writing of this get-even book. (Squires got the big-bucks send-off anyway.)

In Squires's view, Madigan is part of an arrogant corporation that saw nothing wrong with then publisher Stanton Cook serving as president of the Federal Reserve Board of Chicago, or that constantly complained about the "tone" of the paper's coverage of the Chicago Cubs, a Tribune Company subsidiary.

"Among the many reasons I was so easily expendable at the Tribune Company is that journalism, particularly newspaper journalism, has no real place

in the company's future," Squires writes. In fact, he declares, the entire newspaper business seems to have no future. Working himself into a lather, Squires says the print press has become "a business run solely in the interest of the highest level of profitability," and "is in danger of disappearing altogether from the American experience."

Jim Squires's sweeping indictment is just a bit oversimplified. For one thing, he lets himself off the hook much too easily. He admits that, as editor of the Tribune Company's *Orlando Sentinel*, "I gladly made myself an advertising salesman. I spoke to their breakfast meetings ... and, yes, even made sales calls." In Chicago as well, he says, he helped demolish the wall between the newsroom and the business office, "in effect surrendering the traditional editorial integrity of the press to the marketing interests of corporate owners." But he has little else to say about this fundamental breach of ethics, other than to assume that most other American editors have made a similar surrender. One gets the sense that Squires has been driven out of the temple and now wants

**READ ALL ABOUT IT!
THE CORPORATE TAKEOVER OF
AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS**

BY JAMES D. SQUIRES
TIMES BOOKS, 244 PP., \$20

to bring the pillars crashing down.

There are other problems with this book. In skewering the Gannettization of the press, Squires tends to romanticize the past as an era of visionary media moguls, somehow forgetting that most publishers of that past wielded their newspapers as partisan instruments and kept their staffs largely free of women and minorities. Nor were the Hearsts and Pulitzers of yore above making money. Squires never allows for the possibility that a chain might use its treasury to improve its newspapers, as did Knight-Ridder, which turned *The Philadelphia Inquirer* from a second-rate rag into a prize-winning powerhouse.

The author is nostalgic for the days when *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* (which he exempts from his indictment because they are still controlled by newspaper families) dominated the national agenda. But while the proliferation of cable outlets, talk shows,

magazines, and tabloids has certainly trivialized the news business, these new forums have also enlivened and democratized it, as the Donahue-style campaign of 1992 vividly demonstrated.

Though he may be a former sinner, Squires's populist instincts, honed during a hard-scrabble Nashville boyhood, are as strong as ever. When he charges that newspaper owners have become addicted to the unrealistic profit margins of the 1980s, that they are all too willing to slash staff and newshole to impress the money managers on Wall Street, it is with the authority of a former general who intimately knows the enemy. "This decade of corporate development changed the nature of the *Tribune* and other newspapers across the country as dramatically as if they had been converted to fried chicken franchises," he writes. "The pressure to profit became a straitjacket for the free press," a habit no different than that of "a crack smoker in Washington, D.C."

From his exile on a Kentucky farm, Squires offers no suggestions on how to

improve this state of affairs. In his view, the battle has been lost, and the only bright spot on the news-gathering horizon is Ted Turner's CNN.

The freewheeling culture of the press has obviously changed since Squires was a cub reporter on the Nashville *Tennessean* in 1962, but I don't believe the corporate mindset is quite as firmly entrenched in most newsrooms as Squires suggests. Newspaper owners have always been concerned with ringing the cash registers, and working journalists have always been drawn to the business for very different reasons.

Squires overlooks a paradox that cuts even deeper than the concentration of media ownership. Newspapers in the 1990s are better written, better edited, and more colorfully produced than at any time in history. Their staffs are bigger, more specialized, and more racially diverse than ever before. Why, then, has market share been sinking for nearly thirty years? And why are so many decent papers, from the *Arkansas Gazette* to the *Dallas Times Herald* to

The Pittsburgh Press, succumbing to natural causes?

The newspaper business is clearly gripped by a malaise that is spiritual as well as financial. Outpaced by television, overshadowed by infotainment, obsessed with celebrities and sleaze, baby-boomer editors and reporters are desperately searching for a niche in a society that is drowning in data. As newspaper companies have grown larger and their staffs increasingly drawn from a well-educated elite, their products have become bland and predictable. They are dangerously out of touch on such subjects as racial conflict and sexual harassment, so unplugged from ordinary readers that they must assemble focus groups to divine the interests of their customers.

In bombastic fashion, Squires angrily blames all these problems on corporate executives of the sort who ultimately banished him from Tribune Tower. But he ignores the less dramatic possibility that much of the fault may lie with journalists themselves.

1993 MEDIA AWARDS FOR JOURNALISTS

sponsored by the

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

To recognize excellence in reporting on speech, language and hearing disorders, their impact and the roles of speech-language pathologists and audiologists. An award of \$1,000 will be presented in each of four categories: newspaper, television, magazine and radio.



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

For information and entry forms contact:

ASHA Media Awards, Public Information Department
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
10801 Rockville Pike • Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 897-5700

Entry deadline: June 30, 1993

Materials must be published or broadcast between June 1, 1992 and May 31, 1993.

1992 Award Recipients are:

Television	Laurie Davison, WTOK-TV - "Healthwatch" series on Speech and Hearing Disorders
Magazine	Mary Makarushka, The New York Times Magazine - "The Words They Can't Say"
Radio	Jerry Dahmen, WMS AM-FM - "I Love Life" series
Newspaper	Richard Saltus, The Boston Globe - "A Case of Aphasia"

MARSHALL McLUHAN, WHAT'RE YA DOIN'?

BY WALTER GOODMAN

No glooming and dooming over television for Douglas Davis. He pounds away at TV bashers, especially in the academy, who have made reputations and livelihoods predicting the end of civilization in terms as dire as those once used by ban-the-bomb apocalypticists. For that alone Davis's polemic is refreshing. Would that it did the job better.

Here are *The Five Myths of Television Power*, as our author lists them in five chapters: "TV Controls Our Voting"; "TV Has Destroyed Our Students"; "TV is (Our) Reality"; "TV Pacifies Us (We Are Couch Potatoes)"; "We Love TV." Leave aside the quibble over whether such assertions deserve the name of myth; they, or something like them, have been vigorously circulated and invite rebuttal.

Davis, who is described as a writer on culture but writes more like a teacher of sociology, joins the critics in their attacks on network television, which he charges "long ago lost psychic touch with the taste of the audience." If that word "psychic" sets off forebodings, they are justified by Davis's style. Anyway, he is against the sort of packaged products that, he says, are turning off viewers, who are in turn turning off what used to be the big audience grabbers and seeking out "raw video." He notes accurately, if not felicitously, that "prime-time TV drama nearly always splices lust and terror to smooth conciliation."

The book's ideal seems to be a sort of New Age TV for the Rousseauian psyche. Davis sees cable stations, VCRs, interactive video, personal computers, and such as "democratizing agents" that are bringing the real stuff into people's

Walter Goodman is a television critic for The New York Times.

lives. He praises the remote control gadget for the freedom it offers to graze and zap.

His specifics, particularly regarding television journalism, are not revolutionary. Nobody is likely to take exception to his compliments to CNN for its "unbuttoned" coverage, with correspondents operating their own cameras, or his welcome to C-SPAN and Court Television for carrying events from beginning to end. But here, as elsewhere, he tends to overreach.

To begin, the unwary reader may come away with the impression that CNN and C-SPAN are trouncing the networks in ratings. Not so. Although the networks are losing viewers, the standard evening news programs that Davis despises still supply most of the nation with its daily allotment of news. Americans turn to CNN in large numbers mainly during times of calamity, and relatively few (by network standards) turn regularly to the estimable C-SPAN or the innovative Court TV at all.

The craving for authenticity that

Davis detects in the television audience is also questionable. The popularity of what he calls the "long-form" sex coverage of the William Kennedy Smith rape trial and the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas encounter, which he presents as heartening evidence of a new and appealing reality on the tube, reflects the mass audience's enduring taste for sex in any form. The networks' recent Amy Fisher docudramas were big hits, too.

But the more significant question for

THE FIVE MYTHS OF TELEVISION POWER: OR, WHY THE MEDIUM IS NOT THE MESSAGE

BY DOUGLAS DAVIS
SIMON & SCHUSTER, 256 PP. \$20.

journalists is whether unmediated coverage of major events is an unadulterated blessing. Yes, it was exciting to see the CNN correspondents sticking microphones out the window of their hotel room at the start of the bombing of Baghdad, and the way the Pentagon controlled network coverage was lamentable. But difficult issues do not

Women in Communications, Inc.
announces the

1993 CLARION AWARDS

Continuing the 83-year tradition of honoring the achievements of outstanding communicators, WICI offers its 21st annual Clarion Awards competition to recognize excellence in all areas of communications.

Categories include: Newspapers, Magazines, Photography, Broadcast (radio and television), Newsletters, Brochures, Special Publications, Public Relations, Advertising, Marketing and Audiovisual Productions.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: MARCH 15, 1993

For entry forms and information, contact:



Women in Communications, Inc.
2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 417
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: (703) 528-4200
FAX: (703) 528-4205

lend themselves to coverage by pictures alone. For matters like recession, medical coverage, immigration policy, and all the other headaches facing the new administration, telling is as important as showing, and whatever their limitations, network correspondents, by and large, still do that better than their counterparts at CNN, who, after all, are playing by the same rules most of the time.

Moreover, one virtue of Court TV, an enterprise Davis rightly admires, is that it does not settle for just keeping the camera rolling; lawyers are on hand to add background and interpretation, without which most viewers would have trouble understanding the finer points of what they are watching, fascinating though that often is. Lately, Court TV has been packaging portions of trials and analysis in one-hour segments, a trend that must dishearten Davis.

Like most polemicists, Davis just won't give his devils their due. It is always a pleasure to have someone trash Marshall McLuhan, but today's theory mongers are not as thoroughly wrong-headed as contended here.

Davis presents the popularity of the "long-form" sex coverage of the Smith trial and the Hill-Thomas encounter as evidence of a new and appealing reality on the tube

Dealing with political campaigns — his best subject — Davis does a service by drawing attention to the fact that many candidates lose even though they outspend their opponents in television advertising. But to say that television is not the absolute power some medianiks proclaim tells us only that every campaign is made up of many elements.

He writes about 1992: "Faced for a change with real issues related to its own survival, the electorate responded by voting rather than by sitting out an

irrelevant, indecisive media disturbance." Granted. But all that means is that when lots of people are out of work, they become worried enough to bear with Ross Perot's infomercials and it gets difficult even for Roger Ailes to make magic. The Clinton victory does not prove that television advertising is of negligible consequence in less drastic times or that voters are as smart and independent as Davis portrays them just because they chose his preferred candidate last year. The Clintonians, after all, also used commercials.

And his hurrahs for the 1992 upsurge of call-in shows is a touch unsophisticated. In flocking to the call-ins, the pols were avoiding the Sunday morning talkies, where they would be pressed on the issues. It looks as though we shall be seeing more of that sort of pretense of populism, and I can't share Davis's joy at the prospect.

Every chapter suffers from similar effusions. Just as you're getting interested in his description, say, of the way video games test children's abilities, he flies off into Peter Panland. His notion

Seeing (or hearing) is believing!

The deadly force of a tornado can only be experienced. But through TV and radio, people can get a feeling for what a tornado is like and an understanding of how to survive.

That's why we're offering:

- Two 30-second TV public service announcements depicting life-or-death decisions during a tornado.
- Two 30-second radio spots with a similar survival message.

Also available for TV: a 10-minute program, "Funnel Facts and Fables," produced for the National Coordinating Council on Emergency Management. This light but meaningful program dispels tornado myths while getting across a survival message.

State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, in cooperation with NCCEM, developed these noncommercial announcements and offers them free as a public service. To order, simply write and specify if you want the radio PSAs, the TV PSAs or both the TV PSAs and the 10-minute video. (Specify 1/2 inch or 3/4 inch videos.)



Funnel Facts
Public Relations Department
State Farm Insurance
One State Farm Plaza
Bloomington, IL 61710

TORNADO TACTICS

of "impressive anecdotal evidence" that television need not drug and stupefy youngsters is "wild whoops of joy and anger from kids pounding, pulling, and pushing images across the screen" in video-game establishments. Are riots at rock concerts similarly reassuring?

Common sense is with him when he argues that if used in imaginative ways, television can help youngsters to learn. (He is especially enthusiastic about the Carmen Sandiego video games, which sound like good stimulating fun.) And amid his rejoicings over whoopee interactivity, Davis also comes out in favor of books that do not pop or sizzle, noting that despite the bleak predictions of critics, more people seem to be reading these days. That's encouraging, but it hardly exhausts the question of television's influence on what is being read or how it is being absorbed.

Even at its most sensible, *Five Myths* is off-putting. The pages are clogged with phrases like "the welter of invective seeking to find mechanistic explanations for deep structural flaws," "the individuating potential of the VCR," and "the arrival of an intensified verbal-visual literacy, informed by the divided or all-encompassing view of life evidenced in our sample." The repeated use of "impacted" as a transitive verb is especially jarring, but no doubt he is riding the wave of the future on that one.

Davis does a lot of name-dropping, sometimes in a peculiarly intrusive way, writing, for example, "from what Edmund Burke might have called from the sublime to the ridiculous." (Incidentally, my *Bartlett's* traces it to Napoleon Bonaparte.) He can't use "Let me count the ways" without mentioning Elizabeth Barrett Browning; and he hauls in the plot of *King Lear* in a labored analysis of what happened in the 1992 presidential election. (I think Larry King played Cordelia.) You may get the impression that Davis is showing off by dusting off his Shakespeare.

"Life, not TV, now drives the world," he announces, as though that needed announcing. But the question, of course, is what part television is playing in life. At its best, *The Five Myths of Television Power* provides glimmers, but, as Robert must have told Elizabeth the hundredth time she started counting the ways, Enough already.

FOUR DAYS IN NOVEMBER

BY JAMES BOYLAN

In the beginning came the Four Days — on Friday, the killing of the president; on Saturday, the grieving in Washington; on Sunday, the shooting of the presumed assassin; on Monday, the rites. Then, on Tuesday, reluctant resumption of the nation's business.

To those who lived through it as members of the television audience, the sequence seemed to unfold like fate. But Barbie Zelizer contends here that the "master narrative" of the Four Days was not fated but constructed by jour-

COVERING THE BODY: THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION, THE MEDIA, AND THE SHAPING OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY

BY BARBIE ZELIZER
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
299 PP. \$29.95

nalists, particularly by national television journalists, and that they have maintained the story in its classic form ever since. Journalists, she says, made themselves "into authoritative spokespersons for the story in its entirety, not just for the discrete moments of coverage they personally saw and heard (or, in the worst of cases, did not see and did not hear)." Although this phrasing suggests some kind of falsification, I think that Zelizer means only to suggest that journalists, having been able to see only fragments of the story, were forced to assemble it as best they could, and eventually to stitch the weekend's entire bizarre sequence into a whole.

The resulting narrative, Zelizer says, was designed to "lend closure to the events of Kennedy's death," to "guide the American people through shock, grief, and reconciliation." But one element of closure — a generally accepted explanation of the events — has proved elusive. The underlying message of the

James Boylan is a former editor of *CJR*.

Trade Secrets with the Best IRE in the Business

FOCUS ON

— Shame of the Cities: How to expose urban rot, shoddy housing, drugs, violence, racism, and discrimination

— In-depth issues: How to uncover stories on health care, sexual harassment, business, the environment, children, and women's issues

— Tools of the trade: How you can make the most of computers

— Why we do what we do: with Sy Hersh, Bartlett & Steele, and others

For more information, contact IRE, 100 Neff Hall, UMC School of Journalism, Columbia MO 65211, or call at (314) 882-2042.

Journalism's award-winning reporters, writers and editors will gather for Investigative Reporters and Editors' National Conference June 3-6, in New York City.

SENIOR EDITOR

National Wildlife and International Wildlife

award-winning environmental magazines published by the National Wildlife Federation, seek experienced Senior Editor.

Responsibilities include conceiving article ideas, working with freelance writers on text assignments, editing manuscripts and writing occasional articles. Candidates should have ten years experience editing and writing for consumer magazines. Must be willing to relocate to Washington, DC area. Knowledge of natural history and environmental issues less important than strong journalistic background. Salary commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits package and non-smoke work environment.

Qualified candidates submit résumé including salary requirements to:

National Wildlife Federation
Attn: 209CJR

8925 Leesburg Pike
Vienna, VA 22184-0001

An Equal Opportunity Employer



Four Days narrative was that the shootings of Kennedy and Oswald were only what they appeared to be on the surface — isolated, traumatic, individual incidents that may have tested but ultimately vindicated the American system. But I wonder whether the narrative did not have a side effect: at the very time that it was trying to consign the weekend to history, did not journalism's intense concentration on the Four Days — "seventy hours and thirty minutes" of television, as NBC boasted — help create Americans' long-term obsession with the assassination? The Four Days narrative offered a beginning and a sadly triumphant ending without a true resolution. People long to have great explanations for great events. Conspiracy theories, however ill-supported, have filled this bill better than the straight-ahead, even banal Four Days narrative.

Not surprisingly, journalists who were involved in the assassination story twenty-nine years ago have retained a kind of proprietary interest in the square version. Many, not all, supported the flawed Warren Commission report. More recently, their furious reaction to the conspiracies hypothesized in Oliver Stone's film *JFK* — which came along just in time to provide Zelizer with an epilogue — revealed not only annoyance at what they consider fictionalization of fact but, yet again, their deep commitment to their original story of catastrophe and recovery.

Was the "master narrative" of the four days following the Kennedy assassination constructed by journalists?

Zelizer also makes a point of arguing that the assassination story has well rewarded the storytellers, the journalists. Initially, the narrative permitted journalists to place themselves prominently at the center of events, even when, as was often the case, they were not reporters but overseers sitting in a studio in New York.

Over time, the narrative was smoothed out. Journalists other than the narrators tended to disappear from the story; troubling questions raised about inaccurate reporting and moblike media behavior in Dallas faded. Journalists associated with the story — Dan Rather, Walter Cronkite, Tom Wicker, Edwin Newman, John Chancellor, for example — became celebrities ranking with those actually involved in the transfer of power. Through association with the assassination, television news received new legitimation; individual careers advanced; professional values were tested and reaffirmed.

Or so goes the argument. Zelizer does not make clear to what degree she believes intent, or calculation, was involved in this purported self-enhancement, and as a result implies that journalists saw the assassination as little more than a career opportunity. If true, the insinuation needs better evidence than is offered here. Moreover, there is

an implicit suggestion that such figures as Rather and Wicker owe their success to the assassination. This may be true in a very limited sense for Rather; for Wicker, it is ridiculous.

Moreover, I think that, to support her contention of aggrandizement, Zelizer overemphasized journalistic self-congratulation after the assassination — job well done, and all that. In an instance of which I have personal knowledge, she says that such "semitrade" publications as the *Columbia Journalism Review* "were generally quick to laud journalists for their coverage." I have dug out that old issue of Winter 1964, which I edited, and read it for the first time in years, and find that it is hardly a white-wash. Still, it is possible to see that our reprinting of reporters' accounts of their work in Dallas, which I recall as having the purpose of showing the uncertainty and inconsistency of what, under stress, even journalists might recall, Zelizer may have read as glamorization.

This book presents a meaty thesis in a fresh scholarly context — that is, exploration of the notion of journalists as an "interpretive community" with power to affect what is known, rather squishily, as "collective memory." But I still do not warm to it. I may be out of the loop and beyond the Beltway, but I have never heard the term of the title — "covering the body" — used for the assignment to cover the president, and the literal turn Zelizer gives it here is too pat. Nor do I like the studied chilliness in tone and building-block style of writing, which I assume stems from the book's origin in a dissertation. I suppose that this can be excused as the author's attempt to legitimate herself in an interpretive community of a different kind.

Even so, this is a work that advances understanding of journalism beyond the old transmission model — the one that pictured journalists as merely processors who took raw data, reprocessed it, and regurgitated it to the waiting public. Something more important happens in that relationship, for the shape that journalists give their stories has the power to affect our enduring historical memories and to place the journalists themselves at the center of those memories. ♦

SHORT TAKES

THE PRICE WAS RIGHT

Bribes were becoming a regular part of the [Boston Mayor James Michael] Curley way. Low-paid reporters were special targets. George Oakes, the Republican running against Curley in 1949, came to the *Christian Science Monitor* reporters with a sensational story. "Curley is passing money to my campaign," he said. "He's doing it through Billy Mullins," the *Boston Herald* columnist. "Mullins is passing me \$500 a week." The *Monitor* reporter replied, "Well, that's not a surprise." "Yes, but that's not the worst of it," Oakes said. "Curley is giving him \$1,000."

The same reporter was once offered a bribe himself. Acting in Curley's name, a fellow journalist sought him out in the press room at city hall and promised him \$50,000 to stop writing exposés on the parking meter scandal (Boston's five thousand parking meters cost \$64 each to install, whereas Cambridge paid \$12 each for its one thousand), the tax abatement racket,

and the printing, painting, milk, and paving contract scandals. "There wasn't a department you could go in without finding corruption," he says. He got some stories from reporters for other newspapers, who were unable to get them into their own papers because Curley used his power over real estate assessments to keep the publishers in line, just as he used bribes to keep reporters in line. As the publication of a religious institution, the *Monitor* was exempt from taxes and so was beyond Curley's reach. The reporter's mother, however, was not. She called her son to complain that he was being too rough on the mayor. "Don't you forget that Curley saved your life," she said, reminding him of how, when their Dorchester neighborhood had been flooded years before, Curley ordered the gas company to restore service without delay. Such old loyalties were Curley's trump card. For many Bostonians, his good works would ever stay their dudgeon at his bad deeds.

FROM **THE RASCAL KING: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES MICHAEL CURLEY (1874-1958)**

BY JACK BEATTY. ADDISON-WESLEY. 571 PP. \$25



CLASSIFIED

BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS/VIDEOS

GOOD VIBRATIONS: The intelligent person's source for sex toys, books and videos. Woman-owned and operated. Catalogs \$5. 1210 Valencia #CJ, San Francisco, CA 94110.

MILLENNIUM NEWS. Monthly newsletter of ideas of world transformation, from more than 450 current sources. Sample \$1, ten issues \$30. MWI, Box 34021/cj, Philadelphia, PA 19101-4021.

KICKING BABY CONSIDERED TO BE HEALTHY — Reader is upset over dog eating Filipinos — CJR offers a collection of hilarious flubs from the nation's press culled from "The Lower Case": *Red Tape Holds Up New Bridge*. \$7.50 each includes postage and handling. Send order with payment to: Columbia Journalism Review, Attn: Books, 700A Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MANAGING EDITOR - Sought by national, non-profit investigative reporting agency. Responsibilities include: supervising 8-10 reporters working in both print and broadcast media; developing major investigative projects for newspapers, magazines and network television news programs; overseeing independent documentary production and publication of a quarterly journal. Minimum 5 years editorial management experience and strong investigative reporting background required. \$45,000 + benefits. AA/EOE. Reply by 3/15/93 to: Executive Director, CIR, 568 Howard St. - 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3008.

FELLOWSHIPS

REUTER FELLOWSHIPS AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY in 1993/94 are open to application by mid-career and senior American journalists. Periods of tenure vary, three, six or (rarely) nine months. Some funding is available, and applications from journalists able to arrange their own funding will be considered. Further information from: Administrator, Reuter Foundation Programme, 13 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PS: Fax (865) 513575.

MISCELLANEOUS

WORD PROCESSING -- transcription, résumés, papers -- laser printing, inexpensive -- FAX, phone: (212) 831-0341.

ASPIRING SCREENWRITERS: Nationally known movie critic evaluates your screenplay's commercial potential and coaches screenwriting. Enclose \$400 fee with manuscript to: Susan Granger, 124 Cross Highway, Westport, CT 06880-2239.

To be in our May/June 1993 issue -- for only \$2.00 per word -- just send your typed copy with check by March 31, 1993.

NOTE: 10 word minimum. Zip codes count as one word; PO boxes and telephone numbers, each two words.

ALL ADS MUST BE PREPAID.

MAIL TO: CJR Classified
700A Journalism Building
Columbia University
New York, NY 10027

How Much Should It Cost To Run A Big Company?

The average administrative cost to run Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans in New York State is just EIGHT CENTS out of every premium dollar. That covers everything from sales to service.

That means 92 CENTS from every premium dollar is returned in subscriber health care benefits.

The average administrative expense of the profit-driven commercial insurers operating in New York State is 25 CENTS out of every premium dollar.

That means 75 CENTS from every premium dollar is returned in subscriber health care benefits.

Who's giving subscribers the most for their money?

It only takes common sense to answer.



**Blue Cross
Blue Shield**
Plans of New York State



Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press
1875 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 1110
Washington, D.C. 20006

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Andrew Kohut, Director
Donald S. Kellermann, Senior Fellow
Carol Bowman, Research Director
(202) 293-3126

The Press And Campaign '92: A Self-Assessment

PRESS SEES COVERAGE AS HAVING HURT BUSH ELECTION CHANCES

A substantial majority (55%) of the American journalists who followed the 1992 presidential campaign believe that George Bush's candidacy was damaged by the way the press covered him. Only 11% feel that

Gov. Bill Clinton's campaign was harmed by the way the press covered his drive to the presidency. Moreover, one out of three journalists (36%) think that media coverage helped the Arkansan win the presidency while a mere 3% believed that the press coverage helped the Bush effort.

Despite reservations about the fairness of the coverage, eight in ten journalists rated press coverage of Campaign '92 as **excellent or good**. Fewer than one out of five (18%) judged press performance as only fair or poor. The survey also found the press thinking it did a good job on most of the major elements of the campaign coverage.

These are the principal findings of a **Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press** survey of more than 250 members of the press community, conducted in the final weeks of the election campaign. The polling included both top and middle level print and broadcast journalists, who were either directly or ultimately responsible for election coverage. Among the sample were 48 members of the media elite — newspaper editors and columnists, network anchors and producers, and the senior newspaper, news magazine and television executives — who the Times Mirror Center, with a nod to author David Halberstam, calls "**The Powers That Be**."

This second Times Mirror survey of the press found the media judging the impact of its coverage quite differently than did the first press survey completed in May of 1992 during the final stages of the presidential primary campaign. The earlier polling found most journalists (50%) thinking that campaign coverage was having a

neutral effect on George Bush's campaign, as he turned back the challenge of an insurgent Pat Buchanan. At that time, a 64% majority thought that Bill Clinton was being hurt by the way the media covered him during his struggle with the "character" problems that plagued his primary campaign.

Although the conclusions about who was helped and who was hurt changed over the course of the year, both surveys found journalists lauding press coverage generally, despite their widespread belief that the coverage was having a negative impact on one of the campaigns. In-depth interviews with top media executives conducted as part of this project reflected a widespread view within the media community that the press bore no responsibility for the impact of its campaign coverage. By and large journalists believe that media campaign coverage was either neutral in intent or neutral in effect.

The complex response to the question of responsibility may also reflect a tendency revealed in many of the interviews to confuse the impact of coverage with the intent of the reporting. Robert C. Toth, Los Angeles Times correspondent, who conducted the in-depth interviews found some top editors and news producers thinking that "negative coverage" had a "neutral effect" because the media was "fair and objective," and reflected reality. Others looked at that same coverage and acknowledged that it hurt the candidate.

The quantitative survey bears out these twin aspects of the press community's belief about the tone and substance of its campaign coverage. "Negative coverage was due to his (Bush's) record" was the main reason (45%) given by journalists who nevertheless judged the effect of the coverage on Bush as neutral. But even respondents who said Bush was hurt by the coverage explained that the harm was the result of either reporting "Bush's record" (38%) or "the focus on the economy" (23%). In short, very similar reasons were given for reaching very different conclusions about

press performance and responsibility.

Media reluctance to accept responsibility for its impact on the campaign is one of the most important findings to emerge from Times Mirror's in-depth interviews with top media executives. In many of these interviews there was evidence of a new defensiveness in the press this fall. "We are more aware of our public image and trying harder not to be seen destroying people by investigative reporting and dishy stories," said a senior editor. The emergence of talk shows this year, as a chastening sign that politics can work well without the press as interlocutor may have further induced the media to lower its profile. So may have the many indications that the public is turned off by "the cult of toughness" that sought to embarrass and demean candidates.

Whatever the reasons of the media's new stance, one editor accurately predicted that "it is unimaginable that in the debates one of the candidates will be asked what he'd do if his wife was raped." Michael Dukakis stumbled badly over that question in 1988. Despite the "convulsive" coverage of Gennifer Flowers in the primary campaign this spring — or perhaps because it recalled the extremes to which the press went for exposés of Gary Hart's philandering in 1988 — a number of media respondents saw Clinton getting off easier this year than Dukakis or Hart did four years ago.

The People and the Press Differ

The public rendered a more critical judgment of the presidential campaign coverage than did journalists. However, both the press and the public see improvements in press performance over 1988.

While 80% of the news media sample rated the '92 coverage as either good or excellent, surveys of the public throughout the campaign found fewer than six in ten rating press coverage of the campaign positively and *more than one in three voters feeling that the press was doing only a fair or poor job*.

The public also became sensitive to differences in the way the press covered Bush and Clinton over the course of the campaign. The percentage of voters who thought that the press was unfair in the way it covered George Bush steadily increased throughout the year. In March, only 13% of voters believed the press was being unfair to the President. By mid-September that sentiment grew to 22%. In Times Mirror's post-election survey, 35% took the view that the press was unfair to Bush in its coverage while 61% saw the press as fair in its coverage. (Comparatively, 77% believed the press was fair to Clinton and 67% believed the press was fair to Ross Perot.)

Both the public and press agreed, however, that the media improved on its 1988 effort. Times Mirror's post-election follow-up survey of voters found 36% rated the press "A" or "B" for its campaign coverage, compared to 30% who gave the press good grades after the '88 campaign. However, the percentage giving the press a "D" or "F" for its campaign performance remained relatively high (31% in '92, 35% in '88).

Similarly, many of the top media people, after grading themselves good, volunteered that the coverage was "excellent if compared with 1988." "We were determined not to ignore the issues this time, not to get caught up in the horse race (polls) and 10-second sound bites," explained one senior editor. Added a network anchor: "We had much more content analysis, much more issue reportage, this year."¹

Coverage of Issues and Economy Praised

Reflecting these views, members of the national press and the top media executives interviewed were positive about specific aspects of campaign coverage. Overall, more than 70% gave **good or excellent** ratings to coverage of Clinton's Vietnam draft status, the candidates' positions on issues, and the economy. There was little difference of opinion within the media community about press performance, as most elements of the press lauded both overall coverage and the media's handling of several specific aspects of the campaign.

The press gave itself a somewhat lower grade (63% rating it good or excellent) for coverage of **Ross Perot's candidacy**. But many of the **Powers That Be** group were nonetheless critical. "We've given Perot a free ride since he entered the race," complained one senior editor. "We were all on the verge of carrying very critical stories about his temperament and his personal life when he pulled out. Since he re-entered, we've treated him as an eccentric."

Observed one television newsman wryly: "We may have been soft on Perot because he was good for ratings."

Times Mirror's media respondents were more self critical about coverage of the **campaign's entanglement with TV's fictional character "Murphy Brown."** Only 50% rated coverage good or excellent and many offered a strong dose of self criticism. Sitcom's unmarried television newswoman character became a cause celebre after she bore a child on prime time and was criticized by Vice President Dan Quayle for flouting "family values." Most members of the **Powers That Be** group felt the underlying issue deserved more serious atten-

tive, citing the *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post* and *New York Times*.

Press Approves Talk Shows; Feeling Not Reciprocated

Television and radio **talk shows** emerged not only as a new platform in political campaigns in 1992, but as the dominant mode of discourse between candidates and voters. Twenty-three talk show hosts surveyed by Times Mirror expressed views that were almost always different, certainly more outspoken, than the traditional press. The broad community overwhelmingly approved the effect of the shows on the campaign (68% said positive), but the shows' moderators did not return the compliment.

Nearly four in ten (39%) rated overall press performance as **only fair or poor**, which was twice more critical than was the press community at large (18%). Similarly, while seven in ten journalists gave the press good grades for the coverage of issues, the economy and Bill Clinton's draft record, more than 50% of talk show moderators gave only fair or poor grades to coverage of these issues.

But almost perversely, the talk show hosts were also more critical of themselves than was the general press community. One in four (26%) of the hosts said the shows had a negative effect on the campaign process. "The format doesn't really allow for exposition on the whole issue," explained one host. "A talk show host has an agenda — part of that agenda is entertainment and securing advertising revenue. I'm just not sure that is the ultimate and valued forum for educating the American public on political issues." Other media critics of this new phenomenon took aim at the cheerleading like atmosphere of some talk show political interviews. Questions are soft, with no follow ups, as many **Powers That Be** people complained. "It's a free-fire zone," said one TV executive in dismissing the new forum, "with soft-ball questions and no follow-up to keep them honest." A senior editor said: "(Larry) King is atrocious as a journalist, but if viewers had no other source of news, bad journalism is better than nothing." Said another editor: "Anytime you air issues, you have to say it's a good thing. At the same time, the quality of the shows makes me cringe."

Talks' moderators were far more likely to acknowledge that Bush was hurt by coverage than was the larger press community (74% vs. 55%), and also more certain that Clinton was helped (52% vs. 36%). Of the various community segments, they were least approving of press assessments of political commercials (only 48% vs. 77% for the community) and twice as disapproving (74% negative) of media-sponsored

Table 1
Rating of 1992 Press Coverage

Rating	Press		Voters			
	Nov 92	Sept 92	May 92	Mar 92	Feb 92	
Excellent	10	12	10	12	11	
Good	70	45	44	51	45	
Only Fair	16	27	33	28	32	
Poor	2	11	10	6	7	
DK/No answer	2	5	3	3	5	
	100	100	100	100	100	

tion than it got. "Quayle's intrusion made it almost impossible for us to examine Murphy Brown in the broader social context of young, unmarried, inner city girls who are having most of the babies," admitted a television newsman. Several of the Times Mirror Center interviewees felt that, as another broadcast journalist put it, "Murphy Brown was actually good for Quayle. We instinctively lined up against him, disdainful of him, saying he's a fool. But he tapped into something." Observed a television producer: "Maybe the moral question for us is how many headlines Iran Contra got compared to Murphy Brown. I'll bet it was 7 or 8 times more about her."

Coverage of **Bush's relation to the Iran-Contra scandal** received the harshest judgment. Over 70% said it was only fair (48%) or poor (23%); only one-fourth (24%) said it was good. The main excuse was the complexity of the story. "Only programs with lots of time, and papers with lots of space, could treat it adequately," said one television executive. Other excuses were that the story was old, and there was "no smoking gun" to prove that the President lied about his knowledge of the arms-for-hostages. "Besides," said a television newsman, "the polls showed most of the public believed the President lied." "Only the three serious newspapers have done a good job of explaining this issue," said a television execu-

¹ When asked in the Spring to compare '92 and '88 coverage, 49% of Times Mirror's press respondents said they felt that coverage had improved.

opinion polling compared to the rest of the press (36%). "I'm starting to think polls don't reflect public thinking," said a show host. Moderators were also more critical on coverage of issues than the community as a whole. More than half gave fair or poor marks to coverage of Clinton's draft status, of candidates' positions on issues, and of the economy, as mentioned above. But they were also more critical than the larger community on Murphy Brown coverage, and extremely critical (87% fair or poor) on Bush and Iran Contra.

"Until Perot's plan came out, for example," complained one talk show anchor on economic coverage, "there was not enough clear delineation of where Bush and Clinton stood. It should have come earlier. We (the media) thought the issue was too complicated, that people didn't care, but they did. The public began demanding more, and press responded. The public was ahead of us on such things. It has done a first rate job this year."

Print vs. Broadcast

Print and broadcast journalists judged press performance in Campaign '92 much the same, with some notable exceptions. Television newsmen were more positive about talk shows' impact than their print colleagues (75% vs. 62%), for example, but among *The Powers That Be*, print Powers were more positive toward the shows than broadcasters.

Print bosses were often quite critical of their broadcast colleagues. "Television got outmaneuvered by the candidates and the radio talk shows this year," said one senior editor. "It decided not to be victimized by 10-second sound bites and political commercials, but it offered no substitutes. Where was the hour of prime time in the campaign explaining the issues? Why was there no hour on Clinton and Bush? I think the written press was pretty good compared to television." Another editor complained that television, unlike the print media, has avoided coverage of the press performance, particularly its own. "Being scrutinized is salutary, but there is clearly less scrutiny of TV by TV, than of print by print," he said.

In comparison, broadcast journalists were often generous in their praise of the written media, singling out specific newspapers and even individual reporters for credit on campaign stories.

These comments notwithstanding, the in-depth interviews with

top print executives often revealed a very insular view of campaign coverage. As one senior editor commented on several issues: "I know how well we (his newspaper) did, and generally how well other papers did, but I can't answer about all the media."

Broadcasters were more critical than print newsmen about coverage of Bush and Iran Contra. This was an issue to which the broadcasters clearly gave less attention because it was complicated, old and unresolved. Talk show moderators were particularly critical of opinion polling, perhaps because they found it of little use on their programs and even counterproductive if horse race results turned off callers by suggesting prematurely that the race was over.

Thumbs Up to Policing Ads, Polling Divides Media

Times Mirror's press respondents were for the most part positive about press coverage of political advertising and the press covering its own campaign performance. But journalists were ambivalent, at best, about opinion polling.

The press community barely gave a positive plurality to **media-sponsored polls** (41%), with 36% negative, 12% saying neither negative or positive and 8% saying not much effect. Print respondents were marginally more favorable toward polling compared to the average. But talk show moderators were far more hostile (74% negative). Familiar arguments were given for and against. "The voter gets to know what the candidate knows, so he can better evaluate why the candidates are doing this or that," said one editor; "polls add insight and understanding." Said another: "It is a horse race, and people want to know who's ahead." But opponents complained that polls can be treated as "self-

reinforcing prophecies," and that respondents may give "politically correct" answers that reflect who is ahead in polls rather than their own views. One television executive complained that polls, like Dow Jones averages, "make you think you know what's happening when you don't." And a television newsmen observed that polls are often used as a substitute for reporting. "Polls are still a work in progress," said a columnist.

Most of the community (60%) applauded **media-coverage of media coverage**. Aside from improving accuracy and quality, the consensus view was that media policing contributes to greater public understanding of the diversity within the press. "The public needs to know that we in the media are among the most vigorous critics of the media," said an editor. But critics, particularly among the broadcasting Powers That Be, dismissed media coverage with such words as "incest" and "masturbation." This may reflect the fact that the electronic media did the least self-examination. Only CNN regularly airs a media affairs program, a condition which one print editor called "a great shortcoming of television." On the other hand, a television newsmen pointed out that newspapers often use their TV entertainment editors to critique television news, producing misinformation and frequently fatuous copy.

Most applause was given to press assessments of candidates' commercials during the campaign (77% positive). Such propaganda debunking, said one television newsmen, "is the primary reason why no Willie Horton ads or their cousins have appeared in this campaign. Our coverage is keeping the bastards honest." Others were less sanguine about the coverage's impact. "They still lie," said a television executive; "we're slowing them down a bit, but they run an ad 400 times while we do one news report once that says the ad is misleading." And an editor noted a downside to such coverage: "Some candidates have used our stories against their opponents, saying (media name) judged the opposition ads to be misleading. So it's not a cure, not a panacea."

"We'll need a Teddy White to come along later to see if those who planned commercials really sat around worrying about whether we'd criticize them or not," observed an editor, in a comment that could well embrace all of the innovative aspects of Campaign '92.

Table 2
Press Rating of Coverage In General And of Specific Issues
(Percent Rating Excellent or Good)

	Overall Coverage	Clinton's VN Draft Status	The Economy	Candidate's Positions On Issues	N
<i>Total</i>	80	72	73	76	(267)
<i>TV</i>	82	70	74	78	(141)
<i>Print/Other</i>	79	74	73	73	(126)
<i>Top</i>	84	70	81	79	(94)
<i>Middle</i>	79	73	69	74	(173)
<i>Powers</i>	83	71	75	77	(48)
<i>Male</i>	80	70	73	75	(213)
<i>Female</i>	82	78	74	78	(54)
<i>18-34</i>	84	84	89	79	(19)
<i>35-49</i>	83	67	71	78	(152)
<i>50+</i>	76	78	73	71	(94)

SURVEY METHODOLOGY: DESIGN OF THE PRESS SURVEY II SAMPLE

The sample for the Times Mirror Press Survey II was designed to be representative of senior members of the national news media. The sample includes people with varying levels of responsibility within national media organizations and additionally includes an independent sample of radio talk show hosts.

First, for the general national media sample, organizations were selected and then, within selected organizations, persons holding specific professional titles were selected. The specific sampling procedures are outlined below.

The complex sample design for this survey involved measurement of three dimensions of the media:

1. Importance of medium in terms of audience size of market/influence upon populace or other media
2. Type of medium, e.g., television, newspaper, radio
3. Level of responsibility of the individual sample member

The three dimensions were sub-defined as follows:

1. Audience size/market
 - a. National audience

2. Type of medium
 - a. Newspapers
 - b. Television stations and networks
 - c. Cable networks
 - d. Wire services
 - e. Radio stations and networks
 - f. Magazines
3. Level of responsibility
 - a. "Top" - broadly defined as senior editors, news directors
 - b. "Middle" - broadly defined as correspondents and reporters

The specific sampling frames employed to select organizations were *Editor and Publisher International Yearbook 1991*, *Broadcasting and Cablecasting Yearbook 1991*, *Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media 1991*, and *1992 Media Encyclopedia: Working Press of the Nation*.

Examination of the sampling frames and other sources suggested a two stage sampling strategy. Media organizations were first selected according to the criteria outlined below.

The Powers That Be respondents who are identified in the detailed tabulations include the very top editors or news executives of national newspapers and magazines, top networks news executives, executive producers of the most widely viewed news broadcasts, and nationally known

columnists, anchors and political correspondents. In total, 48 respondents fell into this category - 19 from print and 29 from broadcasting.

The sample for the radio talk show hosts portion of the survey was selected through the National Association of Talk Show Hosts. First, the top 10 radio markets were identified. Within each market those association members with the largest audience were selected for the sample.

The final selected sample was divided into five subsamples. Each subsample was split into replicates and quotas were set for number of completed interviews from each subsample. These quotas were set because the sampling frame for "Top" level respondents was somewhat smaller than for the other groups represented in the sample. In order to ensure adequate representation of these smaller groups in the final sample of complete interviews it was necessary to set quotas. The subsamples and quotas for each are listed below:

SUBSAMPLE	QUOTA
National TV Top Level	37
National TV Middle Level	104
National Newspapers/Wire and News Services/Magazines/ Radio Top Level	57
National Newspapers/Wire and News Services/Magazines/ Radio Middle Level	69
Radio Talk Show Hosts	23
TOTAL	290

Each person sampled for this survey was mailed an advance letter. The letters were intended to introduce the survey to prospective respondents, describe the nature and purpose of the survey and encourage participation in the survey. Approximately one week after the letter was mailed specially trained interviewers began calling the individual sample members and conducting the survey or setting up appointments to conduct the survey at a later date.

Interviewers for this survey were experienced, executive interviewers specially trained to ensure their familiarity with the questionnaire and their professionalism in dealing with media professionals of this level. The interviewing was conducted from October 7, 1992 through October 29, 1992.

In addition to the regular telephone interviewing, Robert C. Toth, correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, conducted personal interviews with 20 of the super elite or **Powers That Be** respondents. These respondents were selected from the top level sample in each category.

MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS SAMPLED

GENERAL NATIONAL SAMPLE

Network Television Stations:

ABC NBC CBS
CSPAN CNN

Television Chains with Washington, D.C. Bureaus:

Gannett Conus
Cox Hearst
Group W King

Top Circulation/Influence Newspapers:

Wall Street Journal Detroit Free Press
USA Today Boston Globe
Los Angeles Times Philadelphia Inquirer
New York Times New York Post
New York Daily News Miami Herald
Washington Post Atlanta Constitution
Chicago Tribune

Wire Services:

Associated Press Reuters
United Press International

News Services:

Knight-Ridder Hart Hanks
Copley Hearst
Gannett McClatchey Newspapers

News Magazines:

Newsweek Time
US News and World Report

Radio Stations and Networks:

Capital Cities/ABC Inc. CBS
NBC United Radio Network
National Public Radio American Public Radio
Mutual News Radio UPI
Sheridan Broadcasting National Black Network
Associated Press Broadcast

PROFESSIONAL TITLES SAMPLED AT EACH SAMPLED ORGANIZATION

NATIONAL SAMPLE — "TOP" LEVEL

Television/Radio Stations

News Directors

Newspapers/Wire Services/Magazines

Managing Editor
Executive Editor
Senior Editor

NATIONAL SAMPLE — "MIDDLE" LEVEL

Television/Radio Stations

Washington D.C. Bureau Chief

Newspapers/Wire and News Services/Magazines

Political Editor Political Correspondent
Political Reporter D.C. Bureau Chief

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TIMES MIRROR PRESS OPINION SURVEY OCTOBER 7-29, 1992

Press/N=267 Powers That Be/N=48 Talk Show Hosts/N=23

INTRODUCTION: Hello, I am _____ calling on behalf of the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press in Washington, DC. May I speak with (Name of Respondent). Is now a convenient time to conduct the interview that was written to you about? (IF NO -- ASK TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT?)

Total	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be	

Q.1 All in all, what campaign event has had the greatest impact on the Presidential election campaign, so far? (Accepted more than one response if given)

Debates	22	27	17	17	30
Republican convention	15	15	15	8	4
Continuing bad economic news/recession	14	15	13	29	4
NET: Perot mentions	28	26	31	35	44
Perot entering the race	11	11	11	8	13
Perot dropping out of the race	11	11	10	8	22
Perot (general)	9	6	12	23	17
Democratic convention	10	11	10	15	9
Clinton's success/campaign strength	9	9	10	13	13
Right wing effect on Republican campaign	8	8	9	4	-
Declining confidence in Bush	8	6	9	8	4
Coverage of Clinton character issue	5	6	4	6	-
No one event/events not important	4	4	5	6	-
Primaries/Events connected to the primaries	3	4	2	4	4
High level of voter interest	2	3	2	-	4

Q.2 All in all, how would you rate the press coverage of the '92 Campaign? Would you say the coverage has been excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Excellent	10	10	9	11	26
Good	70	71	70	73	35
Only Fair	16	16	16	8	17
Poor	2	1	3	2	22
Don't know	2	2	2	6	-
	100	100	100	100	100

Total May 1992	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
	Total	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be

Q.3 All in all, has George Bush's candidacy been helped or hurt by the way the press has covered him or has the press coverage had a neutral effect on his candidacy?

Helped	22	3	2	3	8	-
Neutral effect	50	39	38	40	38	26
Hurt	24	55	57	54	52	74
Don't know	2	3	3	3	2	-
	98 ¹	100	100	100	100	100

Total	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be	

Q.4 Why do you feel that way? (PROBE: ANYTHING ELSE?)

NEUTRAL:

Negative coverage due to record	45	51	38	61	2
Press has been fair/Unbiased	34	36	32	17	1
Press given equal treatment to both	7	2	12	6	1
Negative & positive balance each other	7	8	6	-	1
Press is not trusted/Media bashing	6	8	4	-	-
Press gives Bush benefit of the doubt	5	4	6	-	-
Press has little effect on voters	1	-	2	-	1
Don't know/No answer	4	6	2	17	-
	109 ³	115	102	101	6

HURT:

Press has reported Bush record	38	35	41	44	5
Focus on economy has made Bush look bad	23	23	24	44	-

¹2% also volunteered "both helped and hurt" in May, 1992.

²The numbers for "Talk Show Hosts" reflect frequencies rather than percentages for this open-ended question.

³Percentages add to more than 100% because more than one response was accepted.

	PRESS				TALK SHOW HOSTS
	Total	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be	
Press is biased against Bush	16	13	21	8	5
Press is biased towards Clinton	14	13	15	8	5
Coverage is tougher/ more thorough	10	9	10	16	1
Press is critical/ Adversarial	8	10	6	-	3
Coverage reflected voter discontent	6	8	4	4	1
Media bashing made Bush look bad	3	4	3	4	-
Press tougher due to incumbency	3	4	3	4	-
Other	2	1	3	-	-
Don't know/No answer	1	1	2	4	-
	124	121	132	136	20

	PRESS				TALK SHOW HOSTS
	Total May 1992	Total	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be

Q.5 All in all, has Bill Clinton's candidacy been helped or hurt by the way the press has covered him or has the press coverage had a neutral effect on his candidacy?

Helped	13	36	42	30	33	52
Neutral effect	12	49	45	54	46	35
Hurt	64	11	8	14	17	9
Don't know	1	4	5	2	4	4
	90 ^a	100	100	100	100	100

	PRESS				TALK SHOW HOSTS ¹
	Total	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be	

Q.6 Why do you feel that way? (PROBE: ANYTHING ELSE?)

HELPED:

Press is biased towards him	29	29	29	13	7
Strong campaign/good campaign strategy	23	24	21	44	2
Positive coverage a reaction to attacks	17	19	13	19	1
Coverage of Bush has made him look good	13	9	21	6	1
Not subjected to same scrutiny as Bush	13	14	13	13	2
Press did not know him/ his record well	8	9	8	13	-

^a10% also volunteered "both helped & hurt" in May, 1992.

¹The numbers for "Talk Show Hosts" reflect frequencies rather than percentages for this open-ended question.

²Percentages add to more than 100% because more than one response was accepted.

	PRESS				TALK SHOW HOSTS
	Total	TV	Print/ Other	Powers That Be	
Because he is new/ Represents change	7	5	11	-	1
Young press enthusiastic about Clinton/Gore	4	2	8	6	-
Other	2	2	3	-	-
	116 ^a	113	127	114	14
NEUTRAL:					
Negative & positive balance each other	66	59	72	68	5
Press has portrayed reality	18	19	16	9	1
Press has been fair and unbiased	11	11	10	14	2
Press has little effect on voters	5	6	3	-	-
Press has given equal treatment	4	5	3	5	-
Other	2	2	3	5	1
Don't know	2	5	-	5	-
	108	107	107	106	9

HURT:

Extensive focus on character issues	69	58	77	75	1
Press just reported facts about Clinton	17	8	24	13	-
Questions about his veracity/Trust	14	8	18	13	-
Press is critical/ adversarial	14	25	6	13	1
Focus on his record as Arkansas Governor	3	8	-	-	-
Other	-	-	3	-	-
	120	107	131	114	2

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	Can't Say
--	-----------	------	--------------	------	--------------

Q.7 As I read from a list of campaign stories tell me how good a job you think the press has done in covering each. First (READ ITEM - THEN ASK) Would you rate press coverage of this as excellent, good, only fair or poor?

a. Clinton's Vietnam draft status

Total	11	61	21	6	1=100
TV	10	60	22	6	2=100
Print/Other	11	63	20	5	1=100
Powers That Be	21	50	23	4	2=100
Talk Show Hosts	8	35	35	22	0=100

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	Can't Say
b. Ross Perot's candidacy					
Total	15	48	27	7	3=100
TV	14	51	24	9	2=100
Print/Other	15	44	31	6	4=100
Powers That Be	21	46	23	6	4=100
Talk Show Hosts	13	52	31	4	0=100
c. George Bush and Iran-Contra					
Total	4	24	48	23	1=100
TV	4	21	49	25	1=100
Print/Other	3	27	48	21	1=100
Powers That Be	4	21	48	23	4=100
Talk Show Hosts	0	13	52	35	0=100
d. Murphy Brown					
Total	12	38	31	13	6=100
TV	14	39	27	14	6=100
Print/Other	8	37	36	13	6=100
Powers That Be	15	33	31	17	4=100
Talk Show Hosts	31	17	22	30	0=100
e. The debate about the debates					
Total	13	58	20	5	4=100
TV	13	58	19	4	6=100
Print/Other	13	59	21	6	1=100
Powers That Be	15	65	12	4	4=100
Talk Show Hosts	13	61	13	13	0=100
f. The candidates' positions on the issues					
Total	17	59	21	2	1=100
TV	17	61	19	2	1=100
Print/Other	16	57	25	1	1=100
Powers That Be	25	52	19	2	2=100
Talk Show Hosts	4	44	43	9	0=100
g. The economy					
Total	27	46	23	3	1=100
TV	28	46	22	3	1=100
Print/Other	26	47	24	2	1=100
Powers That Be	27	48	15	8	2=100
Talk Show Hosts	0	44	30	26	0=100

	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
Total	TV	Print/Other	Powers That Be	

Q.8 Do you think press assessment of candidates' commercials is having a positive effect or negative effect on the campaign process?

Positive	77	74	81	77	48
Not negative or positive (VOL)	6	7	4	9	9
Negative	2	4	1	2	13
Not much effect (VOL)	10	8	12	6	30
Don't know	5	7	2	6	-
	100	100	100	100	100

	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
Total	TV	Print/Other	Powers That Be	

Q.9 Do you think the increased importance of talk shows such as Larry King and Rush Limbaugh is having a positive effect or negative effect on the campaign process?

Positive	68	75	62	73	65
Not negative or positive (VOL)	8	4	11	13	5
Negative	19	16	23	8	26
Not much effect (VOL)	1	1	1	-	-
Don't know	4	4	3	6	4
	100	100	100	100	100

Q.10 Do you think media coverage of media coverage of the campaign is having a positive effect or negative effect on campaign coverage?

Positive	60	52	69	54	39
Not negative or positive (VOL)	11	16	5	13	22
Negative	10	10	9	6	22
Not much effect (VOL)	14	16	13	23	17
Don't know	5	6	4	4	-
	100	100	100	100	100

Q.11 Do you think media-sponsored opinion polling is having a positive effect or negative effect on campaign coverage?

Positive	41	37	45	42	18
Not negative or positive (VOL)	12	13	11	17	4
Negative	36	36	35	31	74
Not much effect (VOL)	8	8	8	4	4
Don't know	3	6	1	6	-
	100	100	100	100	100

	PRESS			TALK SHOW HOSTS
Total May 1992 ²	Total	TV	Print/Other	Powers That Be

Q.12 How do you rate the chances of Bill Clinton winning the White House in November? Do you think there is an excellent chance, good chance, only fair chance or poor chance that Clinton will win in November?

Excellent	1	56	58	54	65	43
Good	12	39	38	40	25	48
Only fair	52	3	2	5	4	9
Poor	32	-	-	-	0	-
Can't say	3	2	2	1	6	-
	100	100	100	100	100	100

²Question wording in May, 1992 was "How do you rate the chances of a Democrat...."

 Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press

The Lower case

■ LATINO NATIONAL POLITICAL SURVEY

U.S. Latinos express strong patriotism



The Patriot-News (Harrisburg, Pa.) 12/16/92

Diary entry says he 'knew fully' of arms shipments to Iran Bush was 'in the loop'

The Philadelphia Daily News 1/16/93

Bush's Iran-contra diary says he was out of the loop

The Philadelphia Inquirer 1/16/93



VIVIAN BURNS — of 2 Howard Court, Woburn, Chairman of Literacy for the Emblem Club presenting a check for the Literacy Center to Dr. Jeffrey Young, (C), Superintendent of Schools in Lexington and Diane Sullivan, coordinator for the Literacy Center. The Literacy Center, a new facility is in need of funds for its many resource materials such as books and tapes to assist the emergent readers in the community. The literacy volunteers are tutors and truly partners in literacy to all those involved in promoting literacy in big and small ways - among the young and the old. Vivian Burns, as chairman, has led Lexington Emblem Members with great exuberance, therefore, helping the Literacy Center to accomplish pathways in literacy.

Daily Times Chronicle (Woburn, Mass.) 1/22/93

Hill claims limited sexual harassment enhances job

Owatonna (Minn.) People's Press 10/29/92

GAO sees waste in space toilet

San Jose Mercury News 1/5/93

Fonda gives poor exercise, acting tips

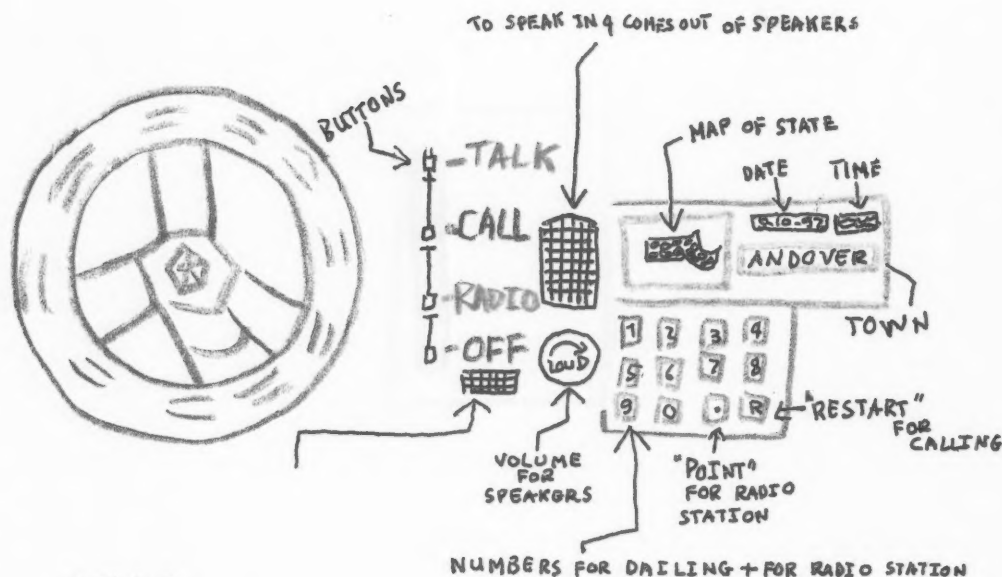
(Newton) New Jersey Sunday Herald 12/6/92

■ The Oregon Republican admits he harassed women, but vows not to quit.

PAGE 13A

San Jose Mercury News 12/11/92

IF KIDS' IDEAS WERE DRIVING COMMUNICATIONS



Mrs. Orlando's Class,
Grade 5, Bancroft School,
Andover, Massachusetts

T. C. R.
(TALK CALL RADIO)

When we asked students in 4,000 schools to design the future, they sent us their

dreams for helping everyone communicate better. What America needs now is a national

communications policy that gives all companies the freedom to help those dreams come true.

NYNEX.

NYNEX YELLOW PAGES • NYNEX MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS • NEW YORK TELEPHONE • NEW ENGLAND TELEPHONE

